

Queen Elizabeth wins lottery

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth was among the winners in the first draw of Britain's new National Lottery. Today's newspaper reported that the queen, 72, had won a share of the £1.1 million prize in the lottery by picking three of the six numbers drawn Saturday evening. The queen sat alone in Windsor Castle watching the live draw on television. Today's source told the newspaper she was very excited when she saw her number on the list. She was even more so when she saw the number on the list.

Diana documentary sells to 21 countries

LONDON (AP) — A television documentary highlighting the life of Princess Diana and her death Saturday evening in Beirut has been sold to 21 countries, producers reported. The London Weekend Television and Sunday Times documentary, "Diana: Her Life in Pictures," was broadcast on Sunday. The documentary, which was produced by the BBC, is a 90-minute film that tells the story of the princess's life from her childhood to her death. It is the first time that the princess's life has been shown in such detail. The film is being shown in 21 countries, including the United States, Canada, and Australia. It is expected to be a major success.

Chinese police illegally detain anti-smoking elders

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese police have been accused of illegally detaining and beating elderly people who were protesting against smoking in public places. The protesters, who were mostly women, were demanding that the government take action to reduce smoking. They were arrested on the grounds that they were disturbing the peace. The police used force to break up the protests. The protesters were then taken to a police station and held for several hours. They were then released without any charges. The incident has caused widespread outrage in China and abroad. Many people are calling for a crackdown on the police.

Algerian parties urge end to killing

ROME (R) — Senior Algerian opposition figures on Tuesday urged an end to the violence that has killed thousands of people since the army cancelled elections and took power in the country in 1992. Speaking at the end of a two-day gathering to discuss the crisis that has killed up to 30,000 people, they demanded the outlawed fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) be included in the political process. Former Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella called on the government to end the violence he says has pushed the country to the brink of civil war by freeing political prisoners and closing the special tribunals that judge them. "Both sides will have to take steps to calm the situation. But the government has to act first," Mr. Ben Bella said. "It must free political prisoners and accept the FIS as a political force," he added. Mr. Ben Bella, Algeria's first president after it won independence from France in 1962. Once that is done, then the FIS and other opposition forces can be called on to make concessions," he added.

Israeli, Saudi officials hold first meeting

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin told Israel Radio Tuesday he had held talks in the United States with a Saudi diplomat in the first such encounter between the two countries. Mr. Beilin said he had met the unnamed Washington-based diplomat at a gathering of Arab businessmen and diplomats in Aspen, Colorado. "It was the first meeting between an Israeli official and a Saudi diplomat," he said. "We mainly discussed the possibility of building an Israeli-Palestinian industrial estate in Erez," on the border between Israel and the self-rule Gaza Strip, he told the radio in an interview from Aspen. "This meeting signifies a change in approach for Saudi Arabia, a key country which sets the tone for the Gulf region," he said. He added: "If Gulf states have recently begun contacts with Israel, it is because Saudi Arabia didn't want to stop them."

Army blows up bomber's house

JALQILYAH (AFP) — The Israeli army late Monday blew up the house of the Palestinian suicide bomber who killed 22 people in an attack on a bus in Tel Aviv last month, military officials said. The house belonging to the family of Salah Abdul Dahim Sufay, 27, was destroyed after the supreme court on Thursday threw out an appeal by his relatives. They claimed responsibility for the Oct. 19 in a bid to keep the bomber's family from being paid compensation. The house was a three-story building and was heavily damaged. The army imposed a curfew in Jalqilyah to prevent demonstrations or clashes with a Palestinian population.

Deal cancelled after suit to Arafat

TEL AVIV (AP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has cancelled a water contract with a French firm after its president, Jerome Monod, reportedly called him a "sick man on drugs." Mr. Arafat's economic advisor Gabriel Monod announced here on Tuesday. Mr. Monod, president of the water giant Suez des Eaux, reportedly said: "To gain Arafat's agreement for water on the Gaza Strip, I waited for 15 hours. I was driven through the streets of Tunis at 150 kilometres per hour, to be fought before a sick man on drugs who took me on his back and kissed me on the mouth." Mr. Monod's remarks were reported Saturday by the centre-left daily Liberation. The remarks were made at a press lunch. Monod signed the 30-year franc (\$6 million) contract on behalf of Lyon's subsidiary Degremont. Monod said: "Yasser Arafat, president of the Palestinian Authority, has instructions to cancel the contract between the Palestinian Authority and the companies of the Lyonnaise des Eaux group chaired by Jerome Monod." The contract was signed under a neo-Palestinian bilateral agreement reached in last June.

ish defends decision

BOURNE (R) — For U.S. President George Bush on Tuesday history showed the United States correct in not trying to force Saddam Hussein during the Gulf war 1991. Mr. Bush said the United States had been successful in driving Iraq out of Kuwait, a mission it fulfilled by international law. It was the role. It wasn't him. It wasn't to go in and occupy power in Iraq," he told a luncheon audience in Melbourne. The liberating forces were powerful it would be easy to roll into Iraqi capital, Mr. Bush said, but such a move would have shattered the 30-nation coalition.

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Arafat seeks to regain lead as Hamas calls rally

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat moved Tuesday to regain the initiative in Gaza from Islamic militant rivals who have called a rally for the end of the week. Mr. Arafat's Fateh faction set up groups to keep track of events across the Gaza Strip, where 16 people died in clashes between Hamas supporters and his Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) police on Friday. The Fateh monitoring committees were to "act in coordination with the higher leadership to provide it with a clear picture of events" across the Strip, senior Fateh official Diab Al Loh said. Mr. Arafat has also spoken of the security role to be played by his Fateh faction's armed wing the Hawks, most of whose 200 members joined the 9,000-strong Palestinian police formed after the peace deal with Israel. For the first time since the launching of Palestinian self-rule, scores of Fateh Hawks turned up with weapons at a huge demonstration Monday in support of Mr. Arafat. The Hawks fired into the air as the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader called on them to ensure security and stability. Mr. Loh insisted Fateh was not planning to form a separate militia.

"Since the start of autonomy, the Hawks have not carried weapons until yesterday," he said. "We are against the presence of a militia, and we are moving towards peace now." "But if some people use force against the police and innocent people, Fateh and the Hawks cannot just remain idle." Mr. Arafat had said in his speech at the rally that "I tell our Fateh Hawks we are all for democracy. But we are for the security and stability of our nation." The Hawks also scrawled graffiti on Gaza City walls, over older slogans from their rivals in Hamas. "Fateh Hawks and the Palestinian police are the shield of the Palestinian Authority," said one in shiny golden letters. Hamas, which is opposed to autonomy and demanded that the PLO leader take the blame for Friday's bloodshed, called on its supporters to come out in strength at a rally on Friday. The demonstration is to be held in memory of a Hamas military chief, Imad Akel, who was killed a year ago by Israeli undercover soldiers, but falls one week after 15 demonstrators were killed in battles with Mr. Arafat's policemen, one of whom also died.

A Hamas official also slammed the pro-Arafat demonstration, saying: "Organising this rally at a time of continued efforts to defuse tension, and the heavy shooting in the air by Palestinian police and Fateh cadres is a disgusting show of force which prompted our people's dismay and fury." Gaza police chief Ghazi Jabali suggested Tuesday the Hawks would be sent out against Islamic militants in the future. It's a message to everybody who is trying to corner the authority that if they want to play the game of gangs, we will do the same," Mr. Jabali told the Associated Press. He apparently was responding to threats by Hamas' armed Izzedine Al Qassam brigades to attack PLO officials if policemen involved in Friday's shooting were not punished. Praising the Hawks, Mr. Jabali said: "These guys were here before Hamas. These are the fighters of the revolution... and they went out yesterday to say, 'We are ready to help the police and Arafat, we are ready to protect what has been achieved'." (Continued on page 3)



A Palestinian Islamist covers his face during a Hamas rally in Gaza City Tuesday with pictures of suicide bomber Hisham Hamad, who killed three Israelis. The Israeli army

Tuesday destroyed the house of another suicide bomber in the West Bank town of Qalqilyah (AFP photo)

King awards medals and gifts to peace negotiators

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday awarded medals and royal gifts to chief Jordanian negotiator Faysal Tarawneh and members of the Jordanian delegation and the negotiations committees in appreciation of their efforts during the Jordanian-Israeli peace talks. Dr. Tarawneh and members of the delegation thanked King Hussein for his gesture and pledged to remain his "faithful, dedicated and loyal soldiers."

In a cable to the King, Dr. Tarawneh voiced his appreciation and that of the delegation and committee members for the great honor King Hussein bestowed on them. Dr. Tarawneh said: "Had it not been for the King's wise leadership vision and resolve to establish peace, this achievement would not have been made." He thanked the King for "the peace gift which he gave to the Jordanian people and the future generations on Oct. 26."

He said, King Hussein has spent the greatest part of his life searching for peace and doing his utmost to achieve it." Dr. Tarawneh praised the efforts made by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and his directives to the delegation members. "Prince Hassan has given us the right advice and the moral support," he said. On Monday, King Hussein hosted a lunch at the Basman Palace to honour head and members of the Jordanian delegation and various committees to the peace talks.

Jordan, Israel plan strategy for joint projects

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian and Israeli officials on Tuesday held talks at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) on how to prepare the ground for discussions on the development of the Jordan Rift Valley as provided for under the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty. The officials from the two sides formed a steering committee which will tackle joint projects.

Muasher tipped to be Jordan's first ambassador to Israel

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter.
AMMAN — The Jordanian leadership has chosen Marwan Muasher, who acted as the country's spokesman during Middle East peace negotiations with Israel, as the Kingdom's first ambassador to Tel Aviv, sources said on Tuesday. Although the appointment is yet to be formalised and announced officially, government sources confirmed that Dr. Muasher was selected to head the first diplomatic mission to Israel. Dr. Muasher would not confirm or deny the news of the appointment. According to the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signed on Oct. 26, the two countries would establish diplomatic relations on Nov. 29 and open their first embassies in Amman and Tel Aviv on Dec. 10. Jordan is the second Arab

country to establish diplomatic relations with Israel after Egypt, which reached a peace treaty with Tel Aviv in 1979. An Israeli delegation was in Amman last week to work out the details involved in the establishing of new ties and reportedly chose a site for the Israeli embassy here. Unconfirmed reports maintain that the Israelis had chosen a temporary base at a building in Jabal Amman, between the Second and Third Circles, until a permanent chancery is built most likely in Abdoun. A Jordanian delegation is expected to travel to Tel Aviv soon also to discuss its plans for establishing an embassy in that city including choosing a site for the chancery there. Dr. Muasher, 38, has had several political assignments, during which he had direct contact with Israeli officials and politicians, including that of spokesman and negotiator,

since Middle East peace talks were launched in Madrid in Oct. 1991. A Jordanian official, who confirmed the appointment, told the Jordan Times that Dr. Muasher was chosen by His Majesty King Hussein from a list of candidates for the post "because of his success at earlier assignment and especially as spokesman." According to the official, Dr. Muasher's talents as "promising politician and a born diplomat" as well as his proven record at articulating the Jordanian position when serving as spokesman have been instrumental in his choice as ambassador. The official said that Dr. Muasher's firsthand experience in negotiations between Israel and Jordan during the past three years "also means that he has background to deal with all the follow-up



Marwan Muasher work in the implementation stage of the Jordan-Israeli peace treaty. Dr. Muasher had also served as director of the Jordan Information Bureau (JIB) in Washington D.C. until February this year and was credited as being the driving force behind the currently high political profile of the office especially in improving the Kingdom's image

By turning to Fateh, Arafat seen to raise stakes in Gaza

By Lamis K. Andoni
PALESTINE National Authority (PNA) Chairman Yasser Arafat has succeeded to assert his control over Gaza in the aftermath of last Friday's bloodshed, but his muscle flexing has sharpened divisions among the Palestinian people. Even if a reconciliation agreement is reached between the PNA and the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, seeds of perpetual friction have been planted as the Gaza Strip is sharply polarised between Hamas and Fateh. Mr. Arafat's critics argue that he is trying to weaken the opposition to the Israeli-Palestinian agreements and the PNA's shortcomings, by portraying its agenda as one aimed at winning its power struggle with Fateh. There is now concern in Gaza that the PNA will

step up its restrictions of political expressions of protests and that Mr. Arafat will depend on Fateh activists to enforce his orders. Gazan personalities, who have been trying to contain the crisis, are particularly alarmed by the continuing escalation of incitement between Hamas and Fateh, which Mr. Arafat has successfully mobilised to counter the opposition. "It is boiling down to a showdown between Fateh and Hamas, and both Arafat and Hamas leaders are responsible," said a respected Gazan. In one of its leaflet Fateh called on its members and supporters to stay on constant alert, armed and guard the PNA buildings — in a language that amounts to waging a war against Hamas which has also been using the same combat rhetoric in its leaflets. Fateh and Hamas leaders

meanwhile continue to exchange accusations about who was responsible for Friday's violence at the Palestine Mosque in Gaza. The recently white-washed walls of Gaza are now splashed with Hamas and Fateh graffiti vowing vengeance. Fateh slogans are signed by deliberately intimidating new name, "Majnun Fateh," (Fateh madmen), while Hamas slogans are signed by its armed wing, Izzedine Al Qassam. Independent personalities in Gaza are particularly critical of the way that Mr. Arafat used local Fateh leaders to organise a huge rally on Monday, that has reinforced an already widespread perception that the PNA is monopolised by Fateh. "Why is Arafat doing this? Is he trying to assert himself as the leader of one faction and not all the Palestinian people?" asked

one personality who has been involved in mediation efforts. Fateh organisations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip that seemed to be splintered before the clashes swiftly united to side by the PNA. ANALYSIS As a result, any future friction could trigger an all-out confrontation between Fateh and Hamas supporters, with the PNA police and security siding with the former, political activists in Gaza and the West Bank warn. Local political leaders in the West Bank and Gaza, contacted by the Jordan Times said they were extremely worried how Mr. Arafat was able to transform the political differences over the peace accords into a deadly power

struggle between Hamas and Fateh. Fateh leaflets accused Hamas and Islamic Jihad of staging a conspiracy to undermine and control the PNA. But, according to eyewitnesses, Palestinian police had controlled the rooftops surrounding the mosque on Friday and immediately tried to stop the demonstration by confiscating loud-speakers. Other groups, such as the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), were taking part in the protest march to call on the PNA to release Islamic activists. The police intervention, sparked riots that spread to other parts of Gaza and protesters surrounded Mr. Arafat's beachfront headquarters and other PNA buildings.

Fateh leaflets say that protesters tried to attack other PNA building and even broke down the front fence of Mr. Arafat's headquarters — known as Al Saraya — and insist that it was premeditated action. The leaflets accused Hamas of killing eight Fateh activists during the riots inside and outside the mosque. Three Palestinian personalities who were contacted by the Jordan Times and who have visited at least 12 houses of the families of the victims said that none of the relatives have charged Hamas. "The families are blaming the police and Arafat personally," said a local Palestinian leader in Gaza. So far Fateh's claims have not been proved, especially that the funerals were predominantly attended by Hamas, Islamic Jihad supporters and

other opposition groups. Prominent Palestinian leader Haidar Abdul Shafi had to intercede with Arafat personally Friday night to ensure that Palestinian police and security remained in their posts to prevent clashes with the mourners on Saturday. But independent observers are also blaming Hamas for stepping up the personal attacks against Mr. Arafat and Fateh. "It is a power struggle of who dominates Gaza at the expense of national unity and the struggle against the Israeli occupation," said one observer. Local Fateh leaders in Gaza said that they view Hamas' threat as a direct challenge to Fateh's influence. "We are going to show them their real size," said one Fateh activist. Mr. Arafat turned to

(Continued on page 3)



CHESS TIME: His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein and the president of the Jordanian Chess Federation, Tuesday hosts a lunch in honour of participants in the Arab Chess Tournament which concluded earlier in Irbid. Fourteen

Arab countries participated in the championship. The lunch was attended by Youth Minister Fawwaz Abul Ghanam and Yarmouk University President Marwan Kamal (Petra photo)

Gaza clash 'weakened' Islamic moderates

GAZA (R) — The recent inter-Palestinian fighting in Gaza has weakened Islamic moderates who had been drawing popular support away from militants opposed to dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Palestinian officials said on Monday.

"The militants won this round of the game, but it won't last," said Ahmad Nasser, an official in PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fateh faction.

Islamists said the Hamas and Islamic Jihad movements made up of independent political and military wings, included officials who had pushed for moderation and pragmatism in dealings with Mr. Arafat.

The Islamists said voices of moderation had been winning some grassroots support after Israel's transfer of Gaza

and the West bank enclave of Jericho to Palestinian self-rule last May.

But the deaths of 16 people in clashes on Friday between Palestinian police and protesters, mainly Hamas supporters, weakened moderates and re-ignited militancy within the groups, the Islamists said.

Sayed Abu Musameh, a leading Hamas figure in Gaza, said: "Now is not the time to talk about a dialogue with Arafat's Palestinian self-rule authority."

"No doubt behaviour on Friday increased tensions among the youths in the Islamic movement, and among people," he said, but added: "The movement's policy is not to reach a civil war."

Leaders of the Islamic opposition, headed by Hamas, denied reports they

had agreed to enter a 20-strong fact-finding mission the Palestinian Authority is setting up to investigate the clashes.

"What we fear is that things will get out of hand. Until now we have no agreement and we are not responsible if something happens," said Imad Al Falluji, a Hamas leader.

"It is difficult to ask people to put behind suffering of 27 years of (Israeli) occupation," said Ala Al Saffawi, a leading figure in the Islamic Jihad.

"When the authority arrived, they were prepared to forget — they hoped things would change. But people reacted to the authority on Friday as they did with occupation armies," Mr. Saffawi said.

PLO official Tayeb Abdul

Rahim told Reuters that Islamic pragmatists were marginalised after the clashes and "hardliners succeeded in winning over grassroots."

"We recently had a dialogue with Hamas moderates, but hardliners sought escalation of tension between Hamas and the authority when they felt they were losing influence on grassroots to moderates," Mr. Abdul Rahim said.

Sources close to Hamas said its activists were talking about revenge for Friday's deaths and a hit list of members of the Palestinian police and administration.

But one Islamic leader, Hamed Al Bitawi, said the bloodshed should spur those in favour of a dialogue with the authority to "push harder in order to end inter-Palestinian fighting."

Mystery students upset Afghan political balance

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — A hitherto unknown group of "religious students" is upsetting the traditional balance of power in southern Afghanistan and is fast garnering support among the war-weary population of the area.

The Talibs, who appear to look to Pakistan for political inspiration, took control of the former royal capital of Kandahar after ousting the long-standing commanders there.

The group then began advancing towards Helmand, a thriving opium production area, and to Zabul province further to the north, according to several Afghan and diplomatic sources.

The Afghan people, tired of factional fighting between local commanders, has welcomed the new group of just one month ago.

Diplomatic sources say the Talibs number about 2,000 and are ideologically motivated, well armed and

funded, and with a declared goal of rescuing the region from the anarchy which followed the collapse of the communist government in 1992.

The group has launched a programme to spread Islam to regions under their control, a move which could potentially lead them into direct conflict with Akhundzadah Ghafar, a major drug baron who rules Helmand.

Diplomats and analysts say there is little doubt that the students have Pakistan's backing, despite the fact that Islamabad maintains it has no intention of becoming involved in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

Pakistan has repeatedly declared itself neutral in the bloody civil war raging between rival Afghan factions, which has claimed more than 7,000 lives in the capital Kabul since the start of the year.

Many of the Talibs, whose brand-new Kalashnikov

assault rifles are the envy of the tattered mujahadeen fighters, have studied at special Koranic schools in Pakistan, the diplomats and analysts said.

Some of the Talibs may come from the Pashtun ethnic minority in Pakistan, and cannot be told apart from the Afghan Pashtuns, the sources claim.

Rumours of Pakistani influence in the area have become so persistent that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad strongly denied any Pakistani military involvement in the clashes which led to the Talibs taking Kandahar.

Whatever the truth, one certainty is that the Talibs and Pakistanis both have the same vested interests in seeing peace come to southern Afghanistan.

Without stability in the region, Islamabad's declared goal of opening up a trading route to central Asia via Kandahar and Herat, cannot be

achieved.

The sudden emergence of the Talibs also coincides with a renewal of Pakistani activity in southern Afghanistan, including the dispatch of a medical supply convoy from Quetta, Pakistan, to Turkmenistan in Central Asia.

The convoy, comprised of 30 trucks and was under the command of a Pakistani secret service colonel, was stopped by two local factional commanders and the drivers arrested, only to be freed later by the Talibs.

But, if indeed Pakistan does support the Talib student movement, it is still unclear what control Islamabad has over it.

One Talib leader, Haji Ghous, said Pakistan should deal with the Afghans as equals.

"If the Talibs achieve credibility in Afghanistan, they will quickly understand that it is not in their interest to be a Pakistani puppet," a diplomat said.

Rich Iranian charity may come under probe

NICOSIA (AP) — The Iranian parliament is gathering evidence for a possible investigation into the operations of a rich foundation, which has been acting more as an investment empire than a charity for the poor. Tehran press reports said.

The Islamic Republic News Agency quoted the daily newspaper Salaam as saying parliament was still compiling complaints of mismanagement and corruption made against the Bonyad Mostazafan Va Janbazan.

The charity, whose name in Farsi means foundation for the disabled and the deprived, is charged with caring for the poor and war veterans disabled in the 1980-88 conflict with Iraq.

Bonyad Mostazafan has been blamed for causing many of the distortions in Iran's faltering economy.

Answerable to no one but Iran's spiritual leader, it has for more than a decade operated with impunity.

It has been allowed to keep money-losing enterprises running, passing losses on to the government, which had to foot huge subsidy bills for raw materials imported from abroad.

In the past, it also made a killing by buying subsidised hard currency, importing goods, and selling them at inflated prices. It pocketed the profits, and the government was left with the subsidy bills.

But in the bleak economic climate now descending on the country, Bonyad Mostazafan's activities may be coming under closer scrutiny amid government fears that worsening conditions could unleash social unrest.

President Hashemi Rafsanjani has announced a war on inflation, unofficially estimated to be running at 60 per cent, and has threatened profiteers with heavy fines and jail sentences.

After the 1979 Islamic revolution, the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini had the wealth of the deposed monarchy and its cronies confiscated and given to the Bonyad Mostazafan. But the organisation has since been enriching itself further by continuing to confiscate private properties and assets on various pretexts.

In the courts, no one dared stand up to the foundation, whose possessions include everything from the old Coca-Cola bottling plant to a string of luxury hotels and even property on New York's Fifth Avenue.

Its managing director, Moshen Rafiqdoust, is a high-school graduate who rose to prominence as Ayatollah Khomeini's driver. He now controls a \$4 billion empire which owns some 1,200 companies, and is brother-in-law of President Ali Akbar Rafsanjani.

Before being appointed head of Bonyad Mostazafan in 1989, Mr. Rafiqdoust was minister of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps. He was accused of corruption and embezzlement after the disappearance of tens of millions of dollars meant for arms purchases during the war with Iraq.



An Egyptian lady wearing an 'Islamic bathing suit' comes out of the water as a tourist gets ready to dive into the Red Sea in Sharm Al (AFP photo)

Warning labels on mini-skirts in Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Some Egyptian shops have begun selling clothing and jewellery with warnings to ensure customers wear them without offending Islamic traditions of modesty.

"These clothes are only to be worn at home and should in no case be worn to go out in," declared a label attached to mini-skirts and other clothes made in stretch fabrics on sale in a Cairo shop.

The garments were sold in unmarked plastic coverings to conceal the identity of the manufacturer and the trader said he had bought them from a sales-rep.

It is a sign of the increasing influence of Islam on the daily life of Egyptians, already demonstrated by the growing number of women and girls wearing the veil.

"This 'advice' has a stronger impact than an open warning from a sheikh or other religious leader," Egyptian sociologist Samiha Hassan told AFP.

"Since the author's identity is not known, it creates an atmosphere of fear as you don't know where the punishment will come from. Whether it will be in the corner of a dark alley where a bearded man is hiding, or whether it will be divine punishment," she added.

Sportswomen rarely wear shorts during competitions, preferring instead to cover up their legs.

Egyptian basketball champion Medhat Warda defied competition rules to wear

A trader in the city's main street Kasr Al Nil who has sold trinkets for the past 40 years, has hung up a similar warning in recent months.

"I am not responsible for any woman adorning herself with such finery to attract the attention of a man other than her husband," says a poster he has stuck in his shop window displaying a tantalising array of jewels with which to adorn the veil.

Meanwhile the emergency of the "Islamic swimsuit," although still rare in smart clubs or beaches, has created a sensation at some resorts. An all-in-one made in lycra, the suit moulds to its wearer showing off every curve or roll of flesh.

To top it off the swimmer is crowned with a veil attached to her bathing cap.

Even on the catwalks, models show off the latest minis and skin-tight fashions accompanied by a commentary from the presenter warning "of course this style does not fit in with our eastern traditions."

Sportswomen rarely wear shorts during competitions, preferring instead to cover up their legs.

Egyptian basketball champion Medhat Warda defied competition rules to wear

shorts which covered knees during an international match in Cairo at the 1990.

He triumphantly displayed a copy of the Koran, when Egypt won championship. "If I lost, it would have been slap in the face to me," commented the author Foda.

Foda, an outspoken of the growing influence of Islam on daily life, announced as a blasphemy, murdered by members of outlawed Al Gamaa al Islamiya in June 1992.

Earlier this month a woman refused to shake hands of President Mubarak when he visited the chaos chaos saying she would not be the hand of any man, her husband.

On Friday during a question and answer session with a sheikh, one wanted to know if it was indecent to sit down chair still warm from previous male occupant.

Muslim militants led by Gamaa have been since March 1992 in a campaign which has cost 500 lives.

Islamic leader spurs Kurds to hate West

VAN, Turkey (R) — Turkish Islamic party leader Necmettin Erbakan, whose Refah Party leads the government in opinion polls, told Kurdish audiences Monday he would "save the world from European infidels" once in power.

The charismatic leader of the right-wing Refah or Islamic Prosperity Party has been visiting Kurdish regions in east and south-east Turkey since Nov. 18, as part of a campaign for parliamentary by-elections that were to have been held next month.

The supreme court last week forced a postponement amid opposition complaints of gerrymandering.

Erbakan said "the hope of all Muslims" and "the leader the world is waiting for," Mr. Erbakan told Kurds to defend their land from imperialists.

Sixty-eight-year-old Erbakan hailed the thousands of Kurds present as "descendants of Saladin," the Kurdish sultan who expelled

Christian crusaders.

He told them to overthrow the "system of slavery imposed by the imitators of the West, the enemy of Islam" and to free Jerusalem, Bosnia and Azerbaijan, in marked contrast to the conciliatory and reassuring tone he adopted on a visit to the United States in October.

Mr. Erbakan said the "Western political system in Turkey was in a state of collapse, and criticised its evasive membership of the European Union (EU) as a divorce from the Islamic World and integration in to that of the "infidels."

Criticising Turkey's siphoning of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which affects Syria and Iraq, Mr. Erbakan said "Prime Minister Tansu Ciller is depriving our Muslim neighbours of water and giving it to Israel at America's request."

Mr. Erbakan's tour was planned before the postpone-

ment of Dec. 3 by-elections in 22 parliamentary seats of which life in Kurdistan.

In March's municipal elections Refah took 23 out of 27 town councils, among them Istanbul and Ankara, including 12 of the 18 Kurdish strongholds.

With 20 per cent of vote, it came in next behind the two other right-wing parties, opposition Motherland and Ms. Ciller's True Path Party, which leads the right-left coalition.

According to recent published in the press, Turkey, with 22.8 per cent ahead of the Motherland Party with 15.9 per cent and True Path Party with 14.1 per cent.

Speaking in Ankara, Turkish President Suleyman Demirel said Sunday "widening Europe is avoidable and we think include Turkey too."

Islamists sue director of Egyptian film about Joseph

The Guardian

A FILM based on the biblical figure Joseph is the latest focus of the battle between secular intellectuals and conservative Muslims in Egypt.

Egypt's highest Islamic institution, Al Azhar, has declared that the film, Al Muhajer (The Emigrant), must be withdrawn from cinemas because of its "anti-Islamic" depiction of the prophet Joseph, or Yusuf.

The director of the film Yusuf Shahine, is being sued

by a lawyer, Mahmoud Abou al-Faid, who argues that the film defames Egypt because it gives the impression of Jewish supremacy over the country.

"The film is Zionist," said Mr. al-Faid, "and Yusuf Shahine is a Zionist."

Mr. Shahine expresses surprise at the criticism. "I am against Israel. They ask me to visit there but I never go. How can there be peace while they dominate us with their nuclear weapons?" he said.

The film, which is drawing

huge crowds, is seen as another opportunity for conservative Muslims to attack secular opponents through the courts.

In August a group of lawyers, led by Yussef al-Badri, sued several Cairo cinemas for displaying film posters featuring scantily-clad women.

Opposition newspapers, headed by the Islamist Al Shaab, have called on the courts to rule against the film, whose story bears more than a passing resemblance to that of Joseph, which is told

in the Koran as well as the Bible.

Mr. Shahine claims the story is autobiographical. Like the protagonist Ram, the film maker emigrated to study film in the United States. Ram, whose name was Joseph in the original script submitted to the censor three years ago, emigrates to learn about agriculture in Egypt.

"For 15 years I've dreamed about making a film like this," Mr. Shahine said. "It's about how I succeeded after leaving this country."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 721111-14

PROGRAMME TWO

17:00 ... Les Travers Du Monde
19:00 ... News in French
19:45 ... E-Mag
20:30 ... Quantum Leap
21:10 ... Snowy River
22:00 ... News in English
22:30 ... Folklore
23:10 ... Coming of Age

PRAYER TIMES

04:45 ... Fajr
06:05 ... (Sunrise) Duha
11:42 ... Dhuhur
14:14 ... 'Asr
16:28 ... Maghrib
17:59 ... Isha

CHURCHES

Mary of Nazareth Church
Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 822366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 7441
St. John's Church Tel. 624590
St. George's Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 62341
Anglican Church Tel. 63851, Tel. 628543

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will drop significantly with rainfall expected in all parts of the Kingdom. Skies will be partly cloudy and winds south-westerly moderate to strong. In Amman, skies will be partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance of showers. Winds will be southerly active and seas rough.

Min/Max temp.

Amman ... 7/11
Aqaba ... 13/20
Dhahran ... 14/14
Jordan Valley ... 12/18

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Hanna Mansour ... 750197
Dr. Farouq Noor ... 786680
Dr. Raith Zalloum ... 889885
Dr. Jihad Zyadch ... 881148
Firas pharmacy ... 661912
Ferdous pharmacy ... 776336
Al Asma pharmacy ... 639055
Naimukh pharmacy ... 626772
Al Salam pharmacy ... 636730
Yacoub pharmacy ... 644945
Shimoon pharmacy ... 637661
Naimukh pharmacy ... 626772
Najib pharmacy ... 647632

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ... 637111
Civil Defence Department ... 661111
Civil Defence Immediate ... 637111
Rescue ... 630341
Civil Defence Emergency ... 199
Rescue Police ... 192-621111, 637777
Fire Brigade ... 617101
Blood Bank ... 775121
Highway Police ... 343402
Traffic Police ... 286390
Public Security Department ... 63032
Hotel Complaints ... 630894
Price Complaints ... 661170
Water and Sewerage ... 897467
Complaints ... 787111
Complaints ... 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ... 121
Overseas Calls ... 011230
Central Amman Telephone ... 623100
Abdullah Telephone Repair ... 623100
Jordan Television ... 773111
Radio Jordan ... 774111
Water Authority ... 660141
Jordan Electricity Authority ... 815615

Electric Power

Company ... 636381
RJ Flight Information ... 85-53291
Queen Alia Intl. Airport ... 06-33290

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre ... 61-813432
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn ... 642816
Akish Maternity, J. Amn ... 642816
Jabal Amman Maternity ... 642816
Malhas, J. Amman ... 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani ... 641714
Shmeisani Hospital ... 669131
University Hospital ... 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital ... 667279
The Islamic, Abdull ... 66617037
Al-Ahl, Al-Muhajir ... 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajir ... 7710103
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh ... 77511126
Army, J. Amn ... 69161015
Queen Alia Hospital ... 61234050
Amal Hospital ... 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ... 09983323
Zarqa National Hospital ... 09983323
Jbn Sina Hospital ... 09986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital ... 09986732

IBRD:

Primeira Basm Hospital ... 02-275555
Great Catholic Hospital ... 02-277275
Jbn Al-Nafes Hospital ... 02-277101

AQABA:

Prince Haya Hospital ... 03-314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:30 ... Amman (RJ)
08:30 ... Amman (RJ)
10:30 ... Amman (RJ)
12:30 ... Amman (RJ)
14:30 ... Amman (RJ)
16:30 ... Amman (RJ)
18:30 ... Amman (RJ)
20:30 ... Amman (RJ)
22:30 ... Amman (RJ)
24:30 ... Amman (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:30 ... Amman (RJ)
08:30 ... Amman (RJ)
10:30 ... Amman (RJ)
12:30 ... Amman (RJ)
14:30 ... Amman (RJ)
16:30 ... Amman (RJ)
18:30 ... Amman (RJ)
20:30 ... Amman (RJ)
22:30 ... Amman (RJ)
24:30 ... Amman (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in lbs per 100

Apple ... 1.50
Banana ... 1.50
Bran (Mukammal) ... 1.50
Cabbage ... 1.50
Carrot ... 1.50
Cauliflower ... 1.50
Chickpeas (large) ... 1.50
Chickpeas (small) ... 1.50
Cucumber ... 1.50
Grape ... 1.50
Lemon ... 1.50
Mango ... 1.50
Mint (green) ... 1.50
Onion (green) ... 1.50
Onion (dry) ... 1.50
Orange ... 1.50
Pepper (red) ... 1.50
Pepper (green) ... 1.50
Spinach ... 1.50
Tomato ... 1.50



BIDDING FAREWELL: Minister of Information Jawad Anani bids farewell to Qatari Minister of Information and Culture Hamad Kuwari Tuesday as he and his accompanying delegation concluded a several-day official visit to Jordan. During the visit Dr. Kuwari was received by His Majesty King Hussein and held talks with government officials. The talks culminated in the signing of new protocols to advance Jordanian-Qatari cooperation in

informational and cultural fields and update a 1981 cultural agreement which provides for cooperation in radio, television, exchange of news and programmes as well as publications, and cooperation between the national news agencies of the two countries. Dr. Kuwari and his delegation were seen off at Marka Airport by Dr. Anani and senior officials (Petra photo)

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Lebanon

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to Lebanese President Elias Hrawi, congratulating him on his country's independence day and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the Lebanese people further progress and prosperity.

OIC chief sends cable to Majali

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Tuesday received a cable from Secretary General of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Hamed Al Ghabed, praising Jordan's efforts to serve Arab and Islamic causes, including the Palestine question, the holy city of Jerusalem, enhancing Islamic solidarity and providing support to the OIC. Mr. Ghabed thanked Dr. Majali for the hospitality accorded to him during the round table conference on the human dimensions of the Middle East peace process, which was held here on Nov. 12, under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and organised by the Institute of Democracy.

Trade minister heads for Brussels talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Rima Khalaf Tuesday left for Brussels to join a Jordanian economic delegation headed by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan. The delegation will hold economic talks with Belgian officials on means of enhancing economic cooperation between both countries.

Qatari sports official to arrive

AMMAN (Petra) — President of the Qatari Youth and Sports Corporation Sheikh Mohammad Ben Eid Al Thani Saturday arrives here at the head of a Qatari delegation on a four-day official visit to Jordan. Sheikh Al Thani will hold talks with Youth Minister

Fawwaz Abu Ghanam and other officials on means of enhancing bilateral relations in the sports and youth fields.

NAF helps 30,023 families since 1986

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Aid Fund (NAF) has granted JD 6,293,129 in cash assistance to 30,023 families since its establishment in 1986, according to Ministry of Social Development Secretary General Suleiman Roussan. The fund was established upon the directives of His Majesty King Hussein to help poor families through cash assistance and rehabilitation projects aimed at generating income for the poor, with a view to ensuring self-reliance.

Workshop on refugee protection starts

AQABA (Petra) — A two-day workshop on protection of refugees and the United Nations role in ensuring their protection started here Tuesday. The workshop, organised by the High Commissioner for Refugees, seeks to promote awareness on ways of protecting refugees, the refugees' rights and possibility of their integration in the host countries. Taking part in the workshop are 25 people from the ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs, Amnesty International, Jordan Red Crescent Society and representatives of the local media.

Business delegation to travel to Baghdad

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Jordanian business delegation, headed by Jordanian Businessmen's Association President Hamdi Tabbaa Saturday leaves for Baghdad on a four-day visit to Iraq for talks on promoting economic and trade cooperation. The delegation will meet with Iraqi Minister of Trade Mohammad Mahdi Saleh, Secretary General of the Federation of Iraqi Chambers of Commerce Faleh Ali Saleh and representatives of Iraqi industrial and commercial companies.

Police inspect vehicle in preparation for winter

By Rana Hussein

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Traffic Department is now three days into its annual campaign to check vehicles in preparation for winter, targeting more than 350,000 motor vehicles in the Kingdom in an effort to minimise road accidents, particularly when weather conditions can create dangerous situations.

Traffic officials are checking whether vehicle tyres are in good condition, windshield wipers are functioning properly and windshield water containers are filled; breaks are working, signal and licence plate lights are functioning; plate numbers are clear and legal; and whether the back cover of pickup trucks are securely fastened.

According to recent numbers provided by the Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents (SPRA), last year's 24,799 road accidents claimed the lives of 440 persons and left 11,745 injured.

Furthermore, the numbers revealed that in the past five years, 1,950 people were killed in road accidents.

Annually, more than 400 people are killed on Jordan's roads, PSD numbers showed.

A Public Security Department (PSD) official said that no fines will be

issued to violators. Instead, he said police units will seize vehicle licences of violators for one week, and "if the car owner does not fix the malfunction within a week, then we will issue him/her a fine."

"Our aim in this annual campaign is to insure the safety of all vehicles, not to penalise motorists," the PSD official told the Jordan Times.

Moreover, the official said, motor vehicles that pass the inspection will be issued an orange sticker to be affixed to the windshield so that it is not pulled over again by other inspection units.

He was quick to point out that officials will continue to look for other violations as well, including failure to wear seat belts, fuel emissions from vehicles causing pollution, wrongful overtaking, speeding, and not carrying a valid drivers licence, and other standard violations.

The PSD official said the first three days of inspection revealed that "most vehicles were well maintained."

He added that very few licences were seized, but would not release any figures.

Meanwhile, PSD reports indicated that 91 road accidents occurred Monday, leaving 22 citizens in critical condition.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

★ Film entitled "Yes, Prime Minister" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m.

POETRY RECITAL

★ Poetry recital by Mohammad Al Ameri at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Ceramics exhibition by Mahr Samarrai at Alfa Art Gallery.

★ Ceramics exhibition by Najwa Annab at the Orfali Art Gallery.

★ Ceramics exhibition by Sa'id Al 'Ani at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art. Also showing a paintings exhibition by Husni Abu Karim.

★ Exhibition on human international law entitled "Drawings from Arab Calligraphy" at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing an exhibition of wooden products by Atallah Zahneh.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Daniel Argimon at the Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre).

★ Exhibit entitled "Signs and Symbols: Communication and Interpretation from the Brandwine Workshop" at the American Center.

★ Ceramics exhibition by Mahmoud Taha at Darat Al Funun.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Ahmad Na'wash at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

★ Exhibition of art by Annie Saklabb at the French Cultural Centre.

Jordan, Israel plan strategy

(Continued from page 1)

schemes in the valley, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

Mumtaz Haddadin, who heads the Jordanian side to the steering committee, said in a statement after the first session that the committee approved of the manner in which Jordan and Israel would approach the European Union (EU) at a meeting to be held soon with EU officials to request financing of joint Jordanian-Israeli schemes in the Jordan Valley.

The two sides also agreed on terms of reference for the plenary committee and on preparing for terms of reference for the committee's work on the development of the Gulf of Aqaba for tourist purposes and for allowing other parties like Egypt to be involved in the development of the Aqaba coast for tourism purposes, according to

Dr. Haddadin.

Mr. Odin Afran from the Israeli foreign ministry, who heads the Israeli side, said that the Jordan Valley region would witness major development through projects in which the private sector would have a key role.

Mr. Afran said that the two sides set up sub-committees to deal with technical and financial matters related to the proposed schemes in the Jordan Valley.

Meanwhile the Jordanian-Israeli transport committee met Tuesday at Aqaba's Coral Beach Hotel and discussed cooperation in aviation and the air corridor between the two countries.

The committee, meeting under the co-chairmanship of Director General of the Ports Corporation Dureid Mahasneh and the Israeli deputy transport minister, also dwelt on marine transport and tourism. The committee will resume its meeting Wednesday.

Clinton ready

(Continued from page 12)

fore, of the U.S. commitment."

The two leaders agreed that "greater attention" should be paid to the problem of "terrorism" funded by Iran. The official said there was a discussion of Mr. Clinton's reaffirmation of the \$3,000 million in U.S. assistance to Israel and of the Arrow missile, which is presently in the research and development stage. The official sidestepped efforts to pin down the cost of U.S. participation in the jointly funded project, which he said is aimed at providing Israel protection against ballistic missiles.

Muasher

(Continued from page 1)

among U.S. officials and particularly the Congress. Due to the success of the JIB experiment in Washington, a similar office was later established in London.

Dr. Muasher, who started his government career as cabinet spokesman in 1989, during the Kingdom's first free parliamentary elections, settled back in Jordan earlier this year with plans to begin preparations to run as a candidate in the next parliamentary elections in 1997.

His appointment to the embassy in Tel Aviv came as a surprise to many who were aware of his intention to become active on the local political front.

'Investment window' to open to facilitate red tape — ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Industry and Trade Investment Encouragement Department will open what it called "an investment window" on Dec. 1 to facilitate procedures for investors in the Kingdom.

Department Director Assem Hindawi, who made the announcement Tuesday, said that officials at the new section would handle all the required formalities and procedures at the various government departments on behalf of the investors and to save them the trouble of conducting the business themselves.

The investment window, said Mr. Hindawi, would mean that investors would be dealing with only government department, and the service is to be free of charge.

Mr. Hindawi also announced that the department would soon publish, in Arabic, French and English, the requirements and conditions requested by the department from investors in different economic projects.

The department will cooperate with the private economic consultancy services in conducting a survey of all the potential areas for the investment in the Kingdom which would then be made available to investors.

Investments in Jordan between July and September comprised 26 projects involving a total capital of nearly JD 33 million and which created 2,075 new jobs, Mr. Hindawi said.

He said all the investors were either Jordanians or Jordanians in partnership with Arab and foreign country nationals, adding that these projects included no Israeli investors.

Currently, seven countries have agreed to exchange this service with Jordan: the U.S., England, France, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Holland, Denmark and Australia.

An additional 20 countries have accepted to return reply mail originating in Jordan. Subscribers to the service in here are subject to an annual JD10 plus the cost of postage for local service and JD25 plus the cost of postage of the country returning the mail for service abroad.

Businesses also assume the expense of printing reply cards and envelopes to the specifications of the ministry.

According to Mr. Kahwaji, the ministry has thus far only received one application from a local magazine for the service. But, he expects the number of subscribers to increase following a media campaign to introduce the service to local businesses.

"This service is needed in Jordan," he said. "There are new international and local businesses that could use a service like this for surveys, sending samples and marketing. It also works the other way — companies in the West and in the region would like to send things to Jordan with prepaid reply cards or envelopes."

Although the service has been available in 42 countries worldwide since 1990, Jordan is only recently joining the ranks. The reason the ministry has decided to adopt the IBRS is two-fold, said Mohammad Kahwaji, the new director of postal affairs. Until business reply mail service was available interna-

tionally, it was only possible to offer two types of prepayment postage: by enclosing an international reply coupon or by enclosing an envelope or card pre-stamped. This was generally considered inefficient because reply coupons have to be exchanged for stamps and because the sender incurs the cost of each piece of reply mail whether it is returned or not — an expensive endeavour for businesses intending to make a large mailing, considering that usually only 5 to 10 per cent of reply items are ever returned to the sender.

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Arafat seeks to regain lead

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Jabali did not say how he would use the Hawks, who used to fight Israeli soldiers, but were pushed to the sidelines when self-rule began in May and Palestinian police took over.

Hisham Abdul Razeq, a leading Fateh official, said Fateh would no longer leave the street to Hamas. If Hamas demonstrators rallied against Mr. Arafat, Fateh supporters would be sent out to a counter demonstration, Mr. Abdul Razeq said.

"We told Abu Ammar (Arafat) that Fateh can have a role in protecting the Palestinian Authority," Mr. Abdul Razeq said. "We will not allow anybody to kill this newborn Palestinian state."

Israel Radio said seven groups of Hawks had been formed in the Gaza Strip as strike forces against Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

The Palestinian Authority also tried some conciliatory measures. Police released 25 Islamic Jihad activists, leaving 70 of the scores arrested still in jail. And in a speech for Palestinian television, Mr. Arafat said Palestinians should not mourn recent events but should concentrate on their twin goals of ending the occupation on all Palestinian land and erasing the effects of 27 years of Israeli military rule. He warned that acts against the authority would not be tolerated, however.

Hamas, in turn, accused Mr. Arafat of provoking his opponents in hopes of unleashing a civil war that would destroy the Islamic

group.

Hamas leader. He said the opposition groups would not be dragged into a showdown. However, he said attacks against Israeli targets, both in the PLO-ruled areas and in Israel, would continue.

Hamas' smaller sister organisation, Islamic Jihad, killed four Israeli soldiers guarding a Jewish settlement in Gaza in the past two weeks.

Mr. Falouji said pressure by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Mr. Arafat to crack down on the opposition was counterproductive.

"We want to make clear for Mr. Rabin that the more pressure he exerts on Arafat to make him oppress us, the more military operations there will be against his (Rabin's) soldiers in Gaza," Mr. Falouji said.

Norway on Tuesday signed a \$10 million accord with the Palestinian Authority in the first sign of international support since last week's blood-bath in Gaza.

Nabil Shaath, minister of international planning, praised Norway's "generous grant" for the three-year project to help develop his department.

Dr. Shaath said the Palestinians were now ready with projects and accountability procedures. "At the beginning we were not ready because our institutions were not on the ground," he told reporters after signing the Norwegian deal.

"Now, our plans are ready and place is swarming with auditors. I don't think there is a problem of transparency any more."

"I think the problem now is with donors," Terje Larsen, U.N. coordinator for the occupied terri-

tories, repeated charges he made Monday against international donors.

"If we assess the donor effort today, I would say very simply: It's a failure," said Mr. Larsen, also present at the signing ceremony in Gaza City.

He said donors had initially pledged \$700 million for 1994, but only \$140 million had actually been disbursed, most of which has gone for salaries and running costs.

Arafat seen to raise stakes in Gaza

(Continued from page 1)

Fateh on Sunday after his lieutenants failed to get more than 500 people to demonstrate in his support. Fateh activists told the Jordan Times that they have agreed to shore up support for Mr. Arafat provided he accepted their demands for reforms in the Fateh movement.

By falling back on Fateh, however, and placing it in the frontline of the confrontation with Hamas, Mr. Arafat might have jeopardised efforts to reach national reconciliation and marginalised the other secular opposition.

Local leaders say that Mr. Arafat's and Hamas' attitudes are perpetuating the impression that the crisis emanates from a conflict between fundamentalist "extremists" and moderate PNA.

But according to Dr. Abdul Shaif, this analysis is an over simplification that overshadows the major conflict arising from the terms of the Israeli-Palestinian agreements and the continuous Israeli occupation.



STUDENT ART: University of Jordan President Fawzi Gharaibeh Tuesday opens a three-day art exhibition by students from Yarmouk University, Jordan

'Kindergarten of peace' to open in Wadi Araba, says charity

AMMAN (Petra) — The Amman-based Al Zahraa Charitable Society has decided to open a kindergarten in the Wadi Araba region and name it "The Kindergarten of Peace" in commemoration of the peace treaty which was signed there last month between Jordan and Israel.

Society President Hanan Kurdi said that a team from the society will soon visit the Wadi Araba region to conduct a survey of the social conditions of people and the number of children of preschool age that could be cared for at the kindergarten.

She said that the society, which is governed by a board of trustees chaired by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma, cares for less fortunate children under five-years-old.

She said the kindergarten, which will be set up at Wadi Araba as part of the Kingdom's celebrations of His Majesty King Hussein's birthday will be solely dedicated to serving the needy children of the region.

Mrs. Kurdi said the society will develop the kindergarten into a school at a later stage and will hold training courses for women teachers at the

kindergarten level to be employed at the centre and other centres run by the society.

Referring to other plans, Mrs. Kurdi said that the society recently opened a kindergarten at Al Jadieh Village in the Bani Hamideh district, offering care to 40 children from local needy families.

Mrs. Kurdi said that the society has been working closely with the Ministry of Social Development in providing other services to the children, including mother and child care, in different rural areas of the country.

Nepal's Communist Party wins elections but short of majority

KATHMANDU (R) — Nepal's Communist Party Tuesday won the largest block of seats in parliamentary elections but fell short of a working majority as political uncertainty gripped the Himalayan kingdom.

The Communist Unified Marxist-Leninist Party (UML) took 88 seats in the 205-member parliament, ahead of the outgoing ruling Congress Party with 81, near-complete results showed.

With only two seats undecided from last Tuesday's voting, Congress was unable to catch up despite an 11th-hour comeback.

The UML could count on qualified support from a splinter group of Communists which won four seats, as well as two independents. But it would still lack a working majority.

The UML had not yet found a coalition partner to give it the necessary minimum 103 parliamentary seats to form a government to lead the kingdom, which abandoned absolute monarchy in 1990 in the face of pro-democracy protests.

Communists demonstrated in the capital Kathmandu Tuesday to protest against what the UML called "the blatant and naked irregularities by the government during the election."

UML leaders had warned of potential violence if it was found that the government tampered with the voting.

UML General Secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal Monday accused Congress of rigging late results in order to cut the Communists' lead and hinder their chances of forming a coalition.

A group of international observers concluded last week that while the election was generally free and fair, there had been "irregularities," mostly committed by Congress.

However, the demonstration got off to a peaceful start and there was no incident during the first hour of protest.

Caretaker Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala said his Congress Party should step down and urged foreign aid donors to continue providing

Nepal with a crucial financial lifeline even if the Communists formed the next government.

But party President Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, long at odds with Mr. Koirala, had indicated earlier Monday that Congress might try to form its own coalition.

UML leaders were set to meet Mr. Bhattarai Tuesday to explore coalition possibilities, Mr. Nepal said.

The Communists have concentrated on wooing dissident Congress Party members who precipitated the snap elections when they abandoned Mr. Koirala in a vote of confidence last July.

Mr. Koirala's government has been riven by allegations of corruption, as well as high inflation and charges it failed to improve the standard of living in Nepal, one of the world's 10 poorest nations with annual earnings of about \$180 a head.

The UML general secretary said former Congress leader and elder statesman Ganesh Man Singh, who broke with Mr. Koirala ear-

lier this year and last week accused him of "misrule," could lead as many as 25 Congress rebels into the UML camp.

Congress officials said party leaders would decide at a meeting Wednesday whether to support the UML, withhold backing or try to form its own coalition.

UML called a meeting of parliamentarians for Wednesday to elect a leader who would be their candidate as prime minister.

"There is an understanding that party chief Man Mohan Adhikari will become the leader of the parliamentary party," Mr. Nepal said. A moderate, Mr. Adhikari survived 17 years in jail and upheaval in his movement to merge two Communist strands.

The Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), whose leaders governed Nepal during three decades of partyless rule until 1990, said it would decide on coalition possibilities on Thursday. With 20 seats, the RPP held a potentially strong bargaining hand.



Chinese President Jiang Zemin (right), Vietnamese Communist Party Secretary General Do Muoi (left) and Vietnamese President Le Duc Anh (2nd left) toast after witnessing the signing of bilateral agreements Tuesday. Mr. Jiang Tuesday concluded his visit to Vietnam (AFP photo)

Little movement on Spratlys as China and Vietnam turn towards business

HANOI (AFP) — China and Vietnam made little headway in resolving their dispute in the South China Sea after a visit here by Chinese President Jiang Zemin, preferring to set the issue aside in the interest of closer economic ties.

In talks with Vietnamese leaders, Mr. Jiang restated principles to find a peaceful solution to claims on the Spratly and Paracel Islands but offered little in the way of new steps to solve the problem.

A communiqué issued after the three-day visit promised that neither side would resort to force or the threat of force. Both countries also agreed to avoid any issues that might "complicate" the problem.

China agreed to a Vietnamese proposal to set up a third working group that will study territorial issues in the South China Sea but details have yet to be worked out, foreign ministers Qian Qichen and Nguyen Manh Cam said.

Similar committees are already in place to discuss the land border and demarcation of the Gulf of Tonkin, but

they are not believed to have made much progress after two years of talks.

Both sides were confident that the dispute, which has soured relations since ties were normalised in 1991, would be set aside as the countries work for a solution, allowing them to step up their growing business links.

"If there are problems that we can settle, we will do so. Otherwise we will leave them aside so as not to affect other relations," Mr. Cam told a news conference.

Before Mr. Jiang's delegation left for Beijing, Mr. Qian brushed off any prospect of multilateral talks on the islands, which also lie in areas claimed by Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan and the Philippines. All the countries except Brunei have a military presence in the atolls.

"There are some countries and people who are very concerned about this issue and they made predictions every day that Vietnam and China will have a conflict," Mr. Qian said.

But he added: "China and Vietnam are entirely capable of resolving this issue by themselves."

Mr. Cam said that time had

not allowed for any discussion of joint development of oil reserves believed to lie under the area, which is seen as a key step towards a future settlement.

The Vietnamese foreign minister refused to set a target for a solution to the problem of the Paracels, taken over by China in 1974, and the Spratlys, where naval forces from the two countries clashed in 1988.

"I'm not a fortune teller so I can't predict an agreement but the problem will be solved earlier than expected," he said before quickly adding that "such complex issues needed time and persistence."

Mr. Cam hinted that Vietnam's entry into the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), widely seen as a move to counterbalance China's growing military and economic power, would help move the issue forward.

ASEAN groups Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

"It's a positive development that will exert a positive pressure to resolve these problems," he said.

Group: Japan has duty to war sex slaves

GENEVA (R) — Japan has a moral and legal duty to the Asian women used as sex slaves by its soldiers during World War II, the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) said Tuesday.

The Geneva-based organisation said its report, entitled "Comfort Women," documented how the Japanese Imperial Army forced sex on between 100,000 and 200,000 Asian girls and women.

It is based on an ICJ mission to the Philippines, North Korea, South Korea and Japan in April 1993 by two female jurists who interviewed more than 40 victims, three former soldiers and government representatives.

"The ICJ report finds that the Japanese Imperial Army

was responsible for the setting up of a vast network of 'comfort stations' for the 'enjoyment' of the Japanese army, before and during World War II," it said in a statement.

"Chinese, Dutch, Filipino, Indonesian, Korean, Malaysian, Taiwanese and other women and girls, often as young as 13, were thrown into these 'comfort stations' and 'sexual services' were extracted from them through unimaginable violence and cruelty."

ICJ said its report, due to be made available later in the day or Wednesday, urges Japan to "take immediate steps to provide full rehabilitation and restitution to the victims as it is clear that it bears a moral and legal

obligation towards them."

The ICJ, composed of about 45 eminent jurists, promotes the rule of law and the legal protection of human rights worldwide.

Last August, the United Nations Human Rights Sub-Commission, a Geneva-based body of 26 members, asked two of its special investigators to look into Japan's wartime use of sexual slaves.

A month later Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama announced a \$1 billion fund to be used over the next 10 years for exchange programmes and to build vocational training centres for women as a token of apology for war atrocities.

But the ICJ brushed aside the planned fund as not counting as compensation.

Mandela opens Africa defence show

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's President Nelson Mandela opened Africa's biggest defence exhibition Tuesday with a plea that defence production should be used for peace and security, not death and destruction.

"On display here are products... which can be used to secure peace and security or misused to sow fearful death and destruction," Mr. Mandela said.

"We have a unique opportunity to help ensure that peaceful purpose are served by the defence industry," he added.

South Africa's DEXSA 94 exhibition is the second defence industry fair put on for general viewing following the first such show in 1992.

Only South African pro-

ducts are on show, although foreign defence sources said foreign exhibitors might participate in the future.

Items on display range from 9mm pistols, to the world-class G-6 155mm long-range artillery Howitzer, the Rooivalk attack helicopter South Africa hopes to sell to the British army, air defence and naval gun systems, sophisticated electronic equipment and a full mobile field hospital.

Foreign defence sources said two items on show for the first time were a G-6 gun turret mounted on an old Soviet T-72 tank chassis and Russia's MiG-29 jet engine South Africa may install in its French-built Mirage F-1 fighter aircraft.

Abba Omar, spokesman for South Africa's Armscor

state arms procurement agency which organised the exhibition, said dozens of foreign visitors were attending the show, including delegations from China and Russia.

He said the exhibition and Mr. Mandela's attendance represented a success for the country's defence industry in two ways.

"The first one is an acknowledgement by the country's leaders that the defence industry has an outstanding contribution to make to the development of South Africa."

"Secondly, the international interest demonstrates that we do have something of worth to offer the international market," he told Reuters.

Russian general goes on trial on bribe charges

MOSCOW (R) — A Russian Air Force general went on trial in Moscow Tuesday charged with embezzlement and taking bribes while serving with Russian forces in Germany.

In a lengthy indictment read out to a military court, Nikolai Seliverstov, former first deputy commander of the 16th Air Force based in Germany, was charged with embezzling more than 60,000 marks (\$39,000) and taking bribes totalling 20,000 marks (\$13,000).

Gen. Seliverstov, 49, a dark-haired, bespectacled figure dressed in civilian clothes, said he would plead not guilty.

"I am not guilty. I have been picked as a scapegoat," he told reporters during a break in the hearing at the three-judge, military collegium of the Supreme Court, Russia's highest military court.

A prosecutor told reporters if all the charges were proved Gen. Seliverstov could go to jail for up to 15 years.

The charges relate to alleged incidents in 1992 in Russia's Western Army Group which served in Germany. It has been the focus of corruption allegations in the Russian media for months.

E. Timor students opt for Portugal asylum

JAKARTA (R) — East Timorese students holed up in the U.S. embassy in Jakarta for the past 10 days said Tuesday they would accept asylum in Portugal because they fear for their safety in Indonesia.

The U.S. embassy and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said they were processing the group's travel documents. Jakarta has reiterated a promise not to hinder their departure, the local ICRC representative told Reuters.

Diplomats following the case said they would leave before the end of the week.

A spokesman for the 29 youths, Domingos Sarmiento

decided to go after alleged harassment from local security officers and contradictory statements about their fate if they stayed.

"It's a hard decision for us because we want to go back to East Timor. But based on our experience here, where Indonesian intelligence officers have continually been threatening us, we feel we should leave (Indonesia)," he said.

The 29 scaled the embassy fence on Nov. 12 to demand the release of their guerrilla leader Xanana Gusmao, who is serving a 20-year jail sentence for subversion.

They also requested a meeting with U.S. President Bill Clinton or other senior U.S. officials then in Jakarta.

Neither demand was granted, but their action dominated media coverage of a meeting of regional leaders in Jakarta. The East Timorese capital of Dili was also swept by a week of rioting and pro-independence protests.

ICRC delegate Henri Fournier said by telephone he had been told by the students late Monday that they wanted to leave.

Portugal, which ruled East Timor until a few months before Indonesia's 1975 invasion and is still recognised by the United Nations as the administering authority, has agreed to take the 29 youths. Lisbon regards all East Timorese as its citizens.



Brazilian Marines ride a patrol vehicle through the streets of the shantytown of Dende in Rio de Janeiro. Some 1,500 federal army troops have been deployed in Rio's slums as part of the Operation Rio to crack down on the illegal trade in firearms and drugs. The troops in Rio de Janeiro. Some 1,500 federal army troops have been deployed in Rio's slums as

Brazil troops pull out of Rio slums

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Army and navy troops have pulled out of two Rio shantytowns after weekend searches for drug-traffickers in which scores of people were detained, an army spokesman said Monday.

The spokesman, Colonel Ivan Cardoso, said the army had also set up checkpoints at the entrances to six other shantytowns in an attempt to cut off the flow of drugs and weapons to gangs.

Referring to the situation in Mangueira, one of the hillside slums where the raids were conducted, Col. Cardoso said: "The hill is no longer under the control of the drug-traffickers."

Army agents had infil-

trated the area and will identify those selling drugs, he said.

In addition to Mangueira, navy units supported by tanks and helicopters spent nearly 48 hours searching for traffickers, drugs and weapons in Dende, a shantytown overlooking Rio's Guanabara Bay.

Army officials had not disclosed how many troops were involved in the two operations but news reports put the figure at between 1,500 and 2,000.

Globo Television said 128 people were arrested in the two raids including the suspected head of the drug trade in Mangueira. Eight weapons and cocaine and marijuana

were seized. Eighteen people remained in custody Monday, Globo said.

A 37-year-old man was accidentally shot in the arm by a navy Marine Sunday while an army soldier was shot and injured by a suspected drug-trafficker the previous day. Another soldier and a police officer were also wounded by accidental fire.

Brazilian President Itamar Franco ordered the military to head a crackdown on organised crime and corruption in Rio in response to growing concern over the power of drug gangs and their influence over the city's police.

India invited to supermodel contest by Ford

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India has been invited to participate in the Supermodel of the World contest after two local beauties won both the Miss Universe and Miss World titles this year, the Press Trust of India said. India will be among the 36 contesting nations in the pageant next year organised by the U.S.-based Ford Model Inc., which has launched several famous models such as Christine Brinkley, Rachel Hunter and Bridget Hall, PTI said. The invitation came two days after 21-year-old Ashwarya Rai, an architecture student from Bombay, won the Miss World title in South Africa's Sun City, just months after compatriot Sushmita Sen was crowned Miss Universe in Manila. Ms. Sen's victory was a debut for India but Ms. Rai is the second Indian Miss World, following Reita Faria who took the title in 1966.

Moscow hosting first top fashion show

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russia's first high fashion week opens here Tuesday with a dozen leading French houses showing their autumn collections from Paris modelled by local mannequins. A new market for fashion and luxury goods has become noticeable here in the past two years. Russians crowd around store windows in their spare time to see that Western goods are on offer, and high class clothing, along with strong liquor, has a preponderant place. Lapidus, Paco Rabanne, Louis Feraud, Torrente, Lecoanet Hemant, Jean-Louis Scherrer and Carven are among the big names who have sent their top people. The fashion parades are being staged in the Rossia Hotel, where tickets for places range from \$15 for a seat to \$700 for the whole week. The idea for the show came from young Russian couturier Valentin Yudashkin, whose reputation has spread beyond the confines of Russia in the past few years. He has significant support for Yousif Kobzon, the Soviet era singer who is cultural adviser to Moscow's mayor Yuri Luzhkov, the sponsor of the event. Mr. Yudashkin will be the only Russian dress designer to mount a collection this week.

Poles start sex life survey

WARSAW (AFP) — The percentage of young Poles who have lost their virginity by the age of 15 or 16 has doubled compared with four years ago, according to a survey reported Monday in the daily newspaper Zycie Warszawy. The proportion has increased from five to ten per cent of teenagers of that age as a whole. Among boys, 25 per cent of 15-16 year olds have had their first sexual experience, compared with 17 per cent four years ago, according to the investigation by the Institute for the Mother and Child. At age 17, 29 per cent of girls and 47 per cent of boys say they have had sex. Researchers found that schoolgirls from comfortable families, who smoked, did not believe in God and did badly at school, were those who had sex earliest. According to the survey among the traditionally Catholic population, girls gave being in love or fear of losing their partner as the reason for starting their sex life, whereas boys cited a need to "release tension."

China's censors give green light to 'sacred' nude

BEIJING (AFP) — China's censors have given the go-ahead to a nude scene in a film marking the 60th anniversary of the celebrated 1934-35 Long March by the communist Red Army under Mao Zedong, a report said Monday. The director of the film Golden Sands, Running Waters described the decision as a "breakthrough," and admitted he had been worried the scene — involving the character of Mao's brother-in-law — might not receive official approval. In the end the censor's praised as "serious, solemn and sacred" the scene, in which a naked young girl from the Yi minority confronts the Red Army during the march. Nudity is still a rarity in Chinese cinema and has generally been confined to the works of more independent-minded directors, rather than official propaganda releases.

Office confirms Berlusconi probe

ROME (R) — Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's office Tuesday confirmed that he had been formally warned he faced inquiry in a corruption probe.

A spokeswoman for the prime minister's office confirmed a report by Italian News Agency (ANSA) that Mr. Berlusconi had received a formal warning of investigation from Milan magistrates. Such notices are issued after magistrates acquire evidence to suspect that a crime may have been committed. The warning was issued hours after Mr. Berlusconi said he had not committed any crime and would not resign.

He was responding to a report in a Milan newspaper that magistrates had placed his name on a list of people who could be investigated for corruption.

The warning is believed to refer to bribes allegedly paid to tax inspectors by Mr. Berlusconi's fininvest business empire before he entered politics. Mr. Berlusconi has said the payments were extortion demanded by corrupt officials.

Mr. Berlusconi said Tuesday he had not committed any crime and would not resign.

The embattled prime minister who has had a long-running war with magistrates over their investigative methods, suggested the information was timed to embarrass him while he hosts a big U.N. conference on international crime in Naples.

The report in the authoritative Corriere Della Sera was another hammer blow for Mr. Berlusconi after his party suffered a severe setback in the first round of weekend elections.

His supporters said it was timed to hit him while he was down and influence the second round of the vote next month. Coalition partners said the furore should not affect the government.

"As far as I am concerned I am serene because, as I have said many times in the past, I am absolutely sure I have not committed any offence," he told reporters in Naples.

Mr. Berlusconi said he was fully determined to "continue in the service of the state" and added that he had not been formally notified by the magistrates of their reported move.

The report said magistrates had put Mr. Berlusconi's name on a routine list of people they may formally investigate in the future if there is sufficient evidence.

The procedure in which magistrates put names on a list of possible suspects is automatic in Italy, but does not imply charges or guilt and is not as serious as a judicial warning, which is issued only after magistrates acquire firm evidence.

Mr. Berlusconi has said in the past that he would not resign even if he did eventually receive a judicial warning.

He repeated his contention that executives of his companies, like many others in Italy, had been extorted by corrupt officials and had no choice but to pay up.

He said the elements of the report were old and based on police questioning of his business partners.

"They, like thousands of other managers and entrepreneurs have been passive victims of extortion and not active corruptors," he said.

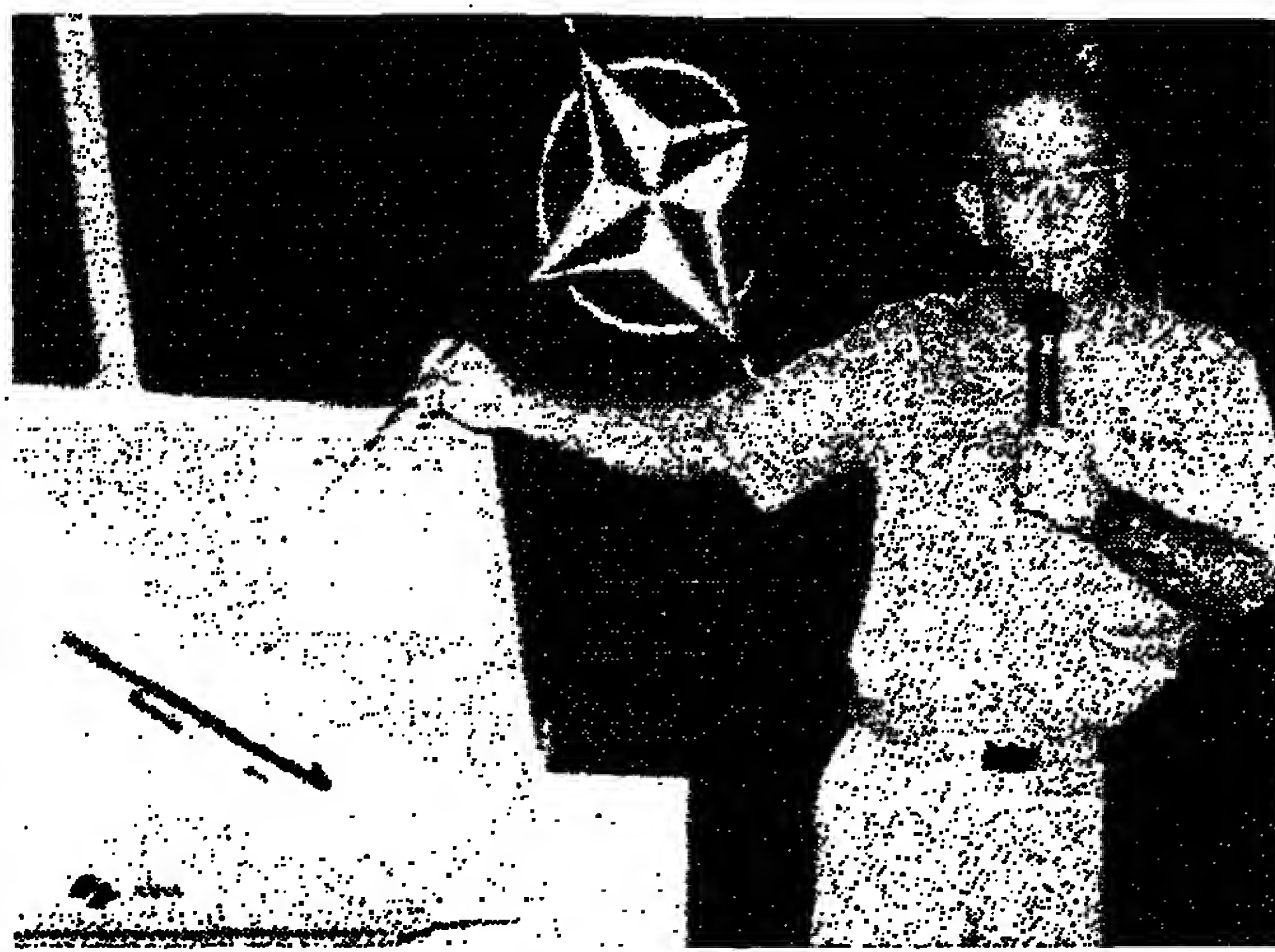
He accused the magistrates, who have not commented on the report, of violating their duty to keep their work secret.

Mr. Berlusconi questioned the "sense of responsibility" of those who had decided to use the information while he is hosting the U.N. crime conference.

Justice Minister Alfredo Biondi said magistrates should open an investigation into the leak. "All I know is that a citizen has discovered from a newspaper that he is being investigated and divulging secret information is a crime," he said.

The episodes involve suspected bribes paid to Italian tax police in 1991 and 1992 by two companies owned by Mr. Berlusconi's Fininvest business empire before he entered politics.

The report in the newspaper rattled markets and initially sent the lira sliding, but the currency later bounced back.



NATO commander for southern Europe Admiral Leighton Smith points to a map showing the area of the NATO airstrikes which hit, earlier Monday, the Udbina Airfield in Serb-held territory in Croatia, during a press conference (AFP photo)

Rich, poor states split on ways to fight crime

NAPLES, Italy (AFP) — Rich and poor countries split Tuesday over how to fight organised crime — as outlined in an Argentine proposal backed by Latin American and African countries as well as Italy and Dr. Chali.

But Western industrialised countries, notably the United States and Britain, wanted more specific and more readily enforceable steps.

Britain's Junior Home Office Minister David Maclean urged delegates Tuesday to "focus on what is practical and achievable and organised transnational crime."

His statement echoed comments the night before by U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno who suggested strengthening bilateral accords to fight organised crime.

An aide to a Western delegation said Tuesday political and economic reasons were behind the developing countries' preference for the more generalised form of a U.N. convention.

U.N. human rights chief slams Khmer Rouge

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodia's militant Khmer Rouge guerrillas are guilty of a variety of human rights abuses, including forced conscription and mass rape, U.N. human rights chief Michael Kirby said in a report.

A copy of the report by Mr. Kirby, special representative for human rights for Cambodia, was obtained by Reuters Tuesday.

The report said the treatment of prisoners in Khmer Rouge prisons, "constitute some of the worst abuses of human rights which are occurring in Cambodia at this time."

The report described one Khmer Rouge detention camp as a barbed wire enclosure in which four makeshift huts are set up on stilts.

The detainees, who include illegal wood cutters, Government soldiers and those accused of being government agents, "are living and sleeping on the bare ground without straw mats, blankets or mosquito nets."

"All were said to be sick with malaria and to suffer from skin diseases resulting from lack of hygiene and very poor sanitary conditions," the report said.

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Murayama fights to hold coalition together

TOKYO (R) — Japan headed for a new political crisis Tuesday with Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama battling to hold his government together and a top minister warning that political upheaval threatened economic recovery.

Several top business leaders also clamoured for an end to the uncertainty that has been set off by widening rifts in Mr. Murayama's Socialist Party, imminent electoral reform and speculation about a snap election.

On Monday Shoichiro Toyoda, chairman of the influential business lobby Keidanren started a chorus of calls by industry captains for early elections in the aftermath of parliament's passage of laws to implement sweeping electoral reform.

He was joined by Hiroshi Saito, chairman of the Japan Iron and Steel Federation, who told a news conference that "under the new electoral system, an election should be held to check what the Japanese people want."

Mr. Murayama is Japan's fourth prime minister since the last parliamentary elections were held in July 1993.

One object of electoral reform is to create a system that gives voters a U.S.-style choice between two major parties that would have the mandate to form a government.

The current ruling coalition of the Socialists, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Sakigake was cobbled together in June through behind-the-scenes negotiations following the collapse of the previous wobbly coalition.

Despite the turmoil, key economy ministers Tuesday warned that dissolving parliament to call elections would cause delays in drafting the fiscal 1995 budget and stifle the country's nascent economic recovery.

Masahiko Komura, director general of the Economic Planning Agency (EPA), said drafting the budget on time requires that Mr. Murayama's government "remain stable."

In his quest for stability, Mr. Murayama, the Socialist chairman, on Tuesday pleaded with Wataru Kubo, his second-in-command, to help him curb moves to split the party and weaken his administration.

On Saturday a group of party mavericks will hold a symposium on the creation of the new Democratic League, a grouping of Socialists and other lawmakers who seek a liberal third force to counter the LDP and the conservative opposition bloc.

Mr. Kubo, a key figure in the new liberal party scheme, told reporters he would "support the Murayama administration as long as it exists."

However, he later urged Mr. Murayama to hasten efforts to unite the liberals, arguing "political realignment will not proceed on the Socialists' time schedule."

The opposition camp, made up of reformist parties that controlled the government from August to April, is keenly watching developments among the Socialists.

The 10 non-Communist parties, which will merge on Dec. 10, seek defections from the ruling camp and hope the turmoil will force Mr. Murayama to call elections early next year.

British jets targetted as Serbs advance on Bihac

SARAJEVO (R) — Serb forces pressed home their attack on Bosnia's Bihac enclave and two British jet fighters came under missile fire Tuesday, less than 24 hours after a punitive NATO raid on a Serb air base.

Two British Sea Harrier jets were fired on by missiles over Serb-held territory, a NATO spokesman said.

"It would appear that two Sea Harriers were subject to being fired on by missiles over northern Bosnia in the area near Banja Luka," said a spokesman at NATO Southern Europe Headquarters in Naples. The aircraft were not hit.

The attack came a day after jets from four NATO nations, including Britain, struck at a rebel Serb airbase in Croatia in the alliance's biggest attack in its 45 year history.

Banja Luka, Bosnia's second city, lies at the heart of Serb-held territory in the north of the republic and is the site of a major air base.

The United States issued a warning that NATO would strike again against the Serbs unless they stopped attacking Bihac.

A senior United Nations official said two people had been killed and four wounded in the NATO attack on Udbina Air Base.

U.N. civil affairs deputy chief Colum Murphy dismissed criticism of the limited military effect of the attack, saying it was vital to keep open lines of communication to the Serbs.

"One is constantly trying to tread that thin blue line where you don't damage communication with the warring parties," Mr. Murphy said.

The raid, seen as sending a political message to the Serbs, avoided attacking Serb aircraft on the ground and NATO conceded the air base could be reopened before very long.

A Serbian technical expert estimated the runway at Udbina could be repaired in less than 24 hours.

Serb troops backed by tanks and a helicopter were advancing across the Bihac enclave Tuesday.

"In the area of Gata Ilidza, it is believed the attacking forces were supported by tanks and a helicopter which fired rockets into BIH (Bosnian army) positions," a United Nations source said.

The local U.N. commander said the Serbs were pushing hundreds of Bihac refugees before them and leaving a trail of burning villages in their wake.

"There is fighting in the southwest of the valley, through Croat villages that are now burning," Colonel Jean Charles Lemieux, the U.N. military commander in Bihac, told Reuters by telephone late Monday.

"There are refugees on the road from West to East," he said. "I've seen (artillery) impacts come down in their villages — the valley was full of smoke."

The Canadian colonel said Serb heavy weapons of all sorts including tanks were being used in the attack on Bihac.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said about 2,000 people displaced by the fighting had fled to Bihac town. Red Cross warehouses in the Bihac enclave had run out of food, spokeswoman Lisa Jones said.

Bosnian government forces in the Bihac enclave broke out of the pocket in October, surprising Serbs who had encircled them for more than two years.

The Serbs lost about 250 square kilometres of territory to the Bosnian army's Fifth Corps before counter-attacking in force, recapturing virtually all their lost ground and threatening the U.N.-protected "safe area" of Bihac town.

Attacks by Croatian Serb combat jets against the Bihac safe area prompted Monday's NATO raid on the Udbina airstrip.

The United Nations said food must urgently be allowed into Bihac enclave to alleviate the suffering of 180,000 people who had received practically no aid since last May.

"It's fine to focus on airfields but there are people on the ground who have a right to food and medical supplies," said Peter Kessler, spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), referring to Monday's air strike.

The UNHCR had appealed repeatedly to the Serbs of the so-called republic of Serbian Krajina to permit convoys to move, but there was an "ongoing policy of using humanitarian aid as a weapon," Mr. Kessler told Reuters in Zagreb.

Unless rebel Serbs who control access to the enclave from the West allow U.N. aid convoys to pass, emergency aid drops would be needed to feed the people, he said.

Two Bosnian Croat soldiers examine a makeshift cemetery for Bosnian Serbs in central Muslim-Croat forces (AFP photo) Kupres. The town, which had been held by

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Arms can't talk

ALL INDICATORS from the Gaza Strip point to the looming possibility of another violent showdown between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and the Hamas and Islamic Jihad organisations. Unless the temporary truce declared between them is not only signed and sealed but also accompanied by other measures to consolidate the PNA grip on power in the affected areas, the showdown will be inevitable. A Gazan driver's comment in the aftermath of Friday's bloody clash that took the lives of 16 Palestinians may have hit the nail on the head when he said that "what happened on Friday will happen again and again if all these weapons are not collected."

"As the initial agreement between the Palestinian Authority and the armed opposition provides for neither the disarming of Islamist groups nor for an end to anti-Israeli attacks from within the Gaza Strip the chances are that another encounter would take place until Hamas and Islamic Jihad accept that there is but one authority in the Palestinian self-rule areas that cannot be challenged by public display of firepower."

There are negative consequences for the entire region in the breakdown of law and order in the Gaza Strip. As former Palestinian spokeswoman Zanan Ashrawi remarked in the wake of seeing Palestinians shedding the blood of their fellow Palestinians, the collapse of the Palestinian-Israeli peace track stands to undermine the whole peace process in the Middle East and not only on the Palestinian track.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has been sounding the alarm about the deteriorating situation, warning that Gaza and Jericho could become "a fertile land for terrorism," if the promised international aid to the Palestinians is not delivered fast. The urgency of making good on international donor pledges has prompted Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to plead for early transfer of necessary funds to the PNA as a token of critical support. The fact that U.S. President Bill Clinton has supported expeditious funding is a good omen for Mr. Arafat, who needs to reassert his authority in the autonomous areas. As there can be no two authorities competing with one another in those areas, or anywhere else for that matter, the Islamist groups must confine their opposition to democratic means or else risk catastrophe for the whole Palestinian people.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Tuesday said that partial solutions to the Palestinian problem in general and the tension in Gaza in particular are not sufficient to end the bloodshed and violence in the occupied territories. The Israelis had nothing to say after the Friday events in Gaza except to blame the donor nations for delaying their supply of funds to the Palestine National Authority (PNA) which could end the local issues by launching projects and financing infrastructure schemes, said Mahmoud Rimawi. It should be noted that the accumulating problems in the occupied regions over the past 27 years do not stem from the delay of sending funds but basically due to the continued Israeli occupation of Arab lands which must end and the Jewish settlements that should be removed to ensure security and peace, said the writer. He said that the problems facing the Palestinians are not all economic in nature, especially as we remember that the intifada erupted eight years ago when the economic situation in the Palestinian regions was far better than it is now. Temporary solutions like pumping funds to finance projects can have limited effect, but the end of occupation would have a lasting settlement to the violence and tension, added the writer.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dostour described the successful visit to Qatar by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali as a natural outcome of the endeavours of the two countries' leaders to maintain strong ties between them regardless of the divisions in the Arab World and despite the past events in the Gulf. Taher Al Adwan said that one can say now that relations with Qatar have become stronger than ever before while Jordan continues the drive to end differences with all the Arab states in the Gulf region. Perhaps Oman and Qatar, among the Gulf states, currently maintain the strongest relations with the Kingdom, but the rest are surely mending fences with Jordan now that the tension caused by the Gulf crisis in 1990 is over, said the writer. Jordan has never stopped building bridges of understanding and brotherly relations with all the Arab states and perhaps the Arabs are now more than at any time in the past in need of solidarity to deal with the common challenges of peace with Israel, said the writer. He expressed hope that Arab reconciliation would pave the way for a serious and collective Arab effort to end the embargo on Iraq.

WASHINGTON WATCH

Peace is at risk as long as its fruits are not felt by Palestinians

The peace process, despite the great hopes that it engendered and its much celebrated achievements, is at a tragic impasse. It is an impasse rather than a collapse because some aspects of the process are irreversible. Instead of moving forward, the Israeli-Palestinian relationship has, to all appearances, entered a new stasis — and within that stasis the dynamic is a downward spiral.

And in this situation the Palestinians are the biggest losers, victims once again of the asymmetry of power that has marked their entire political history.

There is a great deal of irony in all this, since it was the Palestinians' signing of a declaration of principles with Israel in 1993 which opened the door and made possible the progress achieved thus far: the Israel-Jordan peace agreement, movement towards ending the Arab boycott of Israel, the expansion of Israel's relations with Muslim nations from two to 14 and the historic Middle East economic summit in Casablanca.

And yet, with world attention focused on those developments, the Israeli-Palestinian relationship itself has deteriorated. It is as if energy has been mobilised towards constructing the 5th and 6th floors of a building whose foundations are unfinished and even crumbling. Or, to return to the original metaphor, Palestinians opened the door to a new Middle East, held it open for others but have not been permitted to enter themselves.

The centrepiece of the Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles was its "mutual recognition" of two peoples with equal rights. In the preamble to the agreement, Israel and the PLO agreed to: "Recognise their mutual legitimate and political rights, and strive to live in peaceful coexistence and mutual dignity and security and achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement and historic reconciliation..."

The implementation of these mutual rights was to be phased, with each phase designed to create the confidence that enables the parties to move forward to the next phase. Israelis expected that the process would create greater security and regional acceptance of their state, while Palestinians expected that the process would yield economic prosperity and implementation of their political rights to an independent state.

But upon entering into negotiations to implement the declaration of principles, the Palestinian discovered that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin lacked the political courage to apply "mutuality" as spelled out in the agreement. The optimism of the Palestinian negotiators was crushed as the Israelis continued to squeeze the Palestinians to accept less and less at each stage of talks.

Nabil Shaath, minister of international cooperation in Yasser Arafat's government, for example, projected that the process would work despite the objections of a strong Palestinian opposition. He described how, as peace expanded, Palestinians would receive the expanded benefits of peace. Opposition would dissipate and those who used violence to subvert the peace would be isolated by the larger community that would be invested in the fruits of peace. The strength of the Palestinian authority and the strength of the peace process itself depended upon the ability to change Palestinian daily life and move Palestinians from a state of oppressive occupation to real freedom.

In this view, the Israeli quest for security and recognition is intrinsically linked with the Palestinian quest for prosperity and peace — they are two sides of the same coin — to the extent that Israel continues to control the process, to impose humiliating conditions on the Palestinian authority, and to dominate daily life in the West Bank and Jerusalem; to that same extent will the Palestinian authority and the peace process itself lose legitimacy in the eyes of the Palestinians. And to that same extent, Israelis will not achieve the security they long for, as Palestinian militants will continue to strike out against them and be supported by a frustrated and alienated Palestinian constituency.

It is now fourteen months since the Sept. 13 signing, and the fruits of peace are too few to maintain momentum for the process in a Palestinian population still losing its rights.

Gaza still has 65 per cent unemployment and open sewers. A recent outbreak of cholera threatens to further devastate an already fragile hope for change.

Even the few thousands Palestinians who worked for poverty-level wages as day labourers in Israel have been repeatedly denied access to jobs — jobs made necessary by an Israeli policy of de-development of the West Bank and Gaza economies during its 27 years of occupation.

Israel has failed to offer even a minimum of confidence-building gestures to the Palestinians. The Israelis have refused to surrender even token amounts of confiscated lands or allow the digging of new wells. Palestinian prisoners (most of whom are political prisoners), instead of finding freedom, were either forced to sign humiliating statements or were freed in Jericho where they had neither family nor employment. And the Israelis continue to exercise control over too many areas of activity, which promotes a lack of public belief in the independence of the Palestinian authority.

"Furthermore, Israel should act to stop new settlements and close the more provocative settlements now. For only when Palestinians experience freedom, the benefits of peace and the hope that justice will be done can their support for the peace process and their leadership be restored. Only then can the Palestine National Authority act with legitimacy to establish order, and only then will Israelis achieve the security they hoped peace would bring."

Israeli settlement-building continues unabated, Mr. Rabin's Labour government, while pledging an end to all settlement construction as a condition of receiving U.S. loan guarantees, has, during the past two years, either completed or started construction on roughly 30,000 new housing units in the West Bank and Gaza and in the "annexed" area around East Jerusalem. Another 15,000 housing units are being planned. And with this construction comes new roads, expanded infrastructure and a stronger Israeli military presence — and reinforced Palestinian conviction that Israel has no plans to surrender land and is committed only to a peace it defines and controls.

East Jerusalem, the religious, cultural, economic and welfare centre of Palestinian life has been virtually cut out from the rest of the Palestinian society. In fact, Jerusalem has become a virtual no-man's land. New legislation being pushed through the Israeli Knesset, which would prohibit any political meetings in Jerusalem with the Palestinian leadership, only adds further insult to existing injury.

The process leading to Palestinian elections has been repeatedly delayed by Israel's concern over the declaration of principle's linkage between elections and withdrawal of Israeli forces from Palestinian cities. While elections are necessary for the legitimacy of the process and the Palestinian authority, Israel's concerns have once again worn-out, quite simply because they have the power to set the time and terms of the process.

KOHL IS CHANCELLOR FOR THE FIFTH TIME...



Green flirtation shows shift in German voting

By Tom Heneghan
Reuters

BONN — An unlikely flirtation between Germany's Christian Democrats (CDU) and the once-radical Greens reflects a shift in voting patterns that could have far-reaching effects as veteran Chancellor Helmut Kohl's era wanes.

Mr. Kohl's cliffhanger reelection on Oct. 16 left the CDU and its badly weakened Free Democrat (FDP) coalition partners only 10 seats ahead of a resurgent three-party opposition.

With the small liberal FDP still reeling from crippling losses in state elections this year, the CDU has suddenly discovered the Greens as potential partners for the future.

Two weeks ago, the CDU helped elect a Green as deputy speaker of parliament. Now it plans to help the party get a seat on Bonn's top secret intelligence watchdog committees.

who would take Germany out of NATO.

"There have been developments here and there that would have been unthinkable 10 years ago," he told ZDF television on Sunday. "How can I know what will happen in 10 more years?"

Wolfgang Schauble, the wily CDU parliamentary leader wooing the Greens, was just as coy. "The CDU is developing, too, and always in new ways," he told Der Spiegel magazine.

Both sides emphatically rule out a political marriage in the foreseeable future, which roughly means between now and Mr. Kohl's announced retirement in 1998.

The Greens, who entered parliament in 1983 wearing jeans and handing out flowers but have matured into pragmatic reformers, argue they still have much more in common with the left-leaning Social Democrats (SPD) than the CDU.

But, as the Greens' new deputy speaker of parliament Antje Vollmer said on Monday: "Lots of people are thinking now about the future, asking where the majorities will come from and

what will happen when the FDP finally crashes."

CDU officials admit wide differences with the Greens but point to about two dozen towns in north Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's largest state, that toppled SPD administrations with CDU-Green coalitions in local polls there on Oct. 16.

"If we want to avoid going into a grand coalition with the SPD, we have to see where we can get a majority," one said.

In the October election, the Greens passed the FDP for the first time to become Bonn's third-largest party, advancing to 7.3 per cent to win 49 seats compared to the liberals' 47 seats in the 672-member parliament.

The liberals fell to 6.9 per cent from their 1990 high of 11 per cent. CDU strategists estimate almost half of the FDP's score came from CDU supporters who voted FDP with the second of their two ballots to ensure the party returned to parliament.

The CDU won 41.5 per cent and the SPD 36.4 per cent.

Analysis of the results showed the Greens have successfully poached many of

the moderate academics, white collar workers and women who used to vote for the FDP.

The liberals, who failed to reach the five per cent minimum needed to win seats in the past nine state elections and face two more threatening state polls next year, are now more centrist and business-oriented than ever before.

"The sociological structure (of the FDP) has clearly moved closer to that of the CDU," the Freiburg elections working group, a team of political scientists from the city's university, said in an extensive study of the poll results.

"In contrast to other parties, the Greens had strong growth in their strongholds and in those of the FDP."

The CDU-Greens flirtation has naturally angered the SPD, which feels outmanoeuvred by Mr. Schauble and jilted by the Greens, whom many Social Democrats had only themselves to blame because, in this campaign as in earlier ones, they have always shied away from supporting a "red-Green" alliance at the national level.

By Dr. James Zogby

LETTERS

Peace and a brighter future

To the Editor:

I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt emotions stirred by the dramatic turning point in our lives, as Jordanians.

Oct. 26, 1994 is a very important day in the lives of every person in this region (including those who probably cannot accept the realities now). It has brought a new chapter in our lives, with no turning back. We should walk ahead into the future built strongly for all by His Majesty King Hussein.

It is well known that life can never be a smooth run, especially after four decades of animosity and insecurity on both sides. We, as mature adults, need to start on a solid ground because if we don't, our children do not have a chance to do so alone. I, as a mother (who being a foreigner, has probably only seen and felt the instabilities of the region for a shorter span), rejoice in the Kingdom's wise decision.

I was surprised to learn that my own children had total confusion in their minds regarding issues like "state of Israel and other issues." I feel strongly that we, parents and serious, unfortunate misconceptions. It is high time, we flexible. It is high time we opened our hearts and arms to our neighbours. Let us give stability and peace as a gift to our future generations. Let us not forget, it is going to be a long, slow process, but with the courage and faith of our see why, this beautiful opportunity should be missed by all of us (the extended Jordanian family).

We all carry an individual responsibility and duty to our country and our kids. This love and caring we share, can be spread to our neighbours, with dignity and trust... By this we all gain, rather than lose, the basic individual right of loving and being loved.

Let us stand behind our leader and build our children's future on a strong foundation, by beginning a new era of peace and stability in all our lives.

Let us look at the positive aspects of the peace treaty. Our borders are defined and a lot of constructive strategy put up for, our betterment. These positive merits should outweigh our negative criticism.

Dr. Barbara Borgan,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

OPEC freezes '95 oil output to boost prices

DENPASAR, Indonesia (R) — Cash-strapped OPEC producers were all smiles Tuesday after clinching an agreement to freeze 1995 oil production and resolving the politically thorny issue of picking a new secretary-general.

Both decisions were backed by all 12 group members and oil traders rewarded OPEC for its rare display of unity by adding 30 cents to the oil price since Friday.

"This (production) agreement is expected to raise oil prices gradually but not to the OPEC target level of \$21 per barrel," OPEC president and Indonesian Oil Minister Idris Bagus Sudjana told reporters.

When asked if the deal could push oil prices to \$18 to \$19 per barrel Mr. Sudjana said, "I hope so."

OPEC has kept its production ceiling at 24.52 million barrels per day (b/d) since September 1993 but oil prices have continued to slide due to higher non-OPEC production. OPEC quota cheating and fears that Iraqi oil exports will resume.

By capping its oil output next year, OPEC is hoping that rising world oil demand will once again pull prices higher.

Libyan Oil Minister Abdalla Salem El Badri said he expected world oil demand to rise 700,000 b/d this year to about 66 million b/d and climb another one million b/d in 1995.

Oil prices now are little better in real terms than they

were before the Arab oil embargo of 1973.

Slumping markets have chopped OPEC's oil earnings by more than half since 1980, when the group held the world to ransom with high oil prices.

Even mighty Saudi Arabia, the world's largest and richest oil producer, has had to pinch pennies to meet budgets and pay off Gulf war debts.

Influential Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Hisham Nazer said he was happy with the new deal and hoped prices would rise.

Sheikh Nazer said the thought prices would rise because "we think demand is good in the market."

But he added OPEC was concerned about non-OPEC oil production, which has been rising rapidly in the last few years. Further increases in non-OPEC output next year could curb the price gains OPEC is counting on.

Oil traders are also worried about abnormally mild weather so far in the United States, Europe and Japan. A mild northern winter could leave world refiners with glutted inventories in the spring and the excess crude could weigh on oil prices for much of next year.

"OPEC is on a bit of a honeymoon now with world oil markets because they have settled their differences so easily," one oil trader in Singapore said.

"Oil prices will rise for a while but then stop and wait to see how the winter is and if there is excess non-OPEC

and OPEC production," he added.

Several OPEC members said they were also still concerned that some OPEC members were cheating on their assigned output quotas. Nigeria, Venezuela and tiny Gabon are all believed by outside sources to be exceeding their limits.

Most OPEC members are now pumping full out with the exception of Saudi Arabia but oil traders will be watching in coming weeks to see if higher oil prices prompt some to milk their wells a little bit more.

"There are a great many members including Saudi Arabia who are very much keen on abiding by the quota," Saudi's Nazer said. Libya's oil minister later added OPEC has some proposals to deal with overproduction but he would not specify them.

OPEC members did not discuss the issue of reintegrating Iraq into world oil markets when United Nations sanctions are removed. OPEC delegates said.

Iraq, once the world's sixth largest oil producer, said once the U.N. exports ban is lifted it will ask OPEC for permission to pump oil at will until it reaches parity with rival Iran.

NAFTA raises concerns on regional pacts, GATT says

GENEVA (R) — The GATT world trade body said Tuesday that developments in the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) might raise further concerns about preferential regional accords and the risks of trade diversion.

In a review of Canada's trade policies since 1992, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) also said trade had driven the economic recovery now underway there.

And Canada should benefit from new markets for its exports under the Uruguay Round world trade treaty, according to GATT.

"The cuts in tariff and non-tariff barriers in foreign markets should help sustain the current export-led economic recovery," it said. Trade diplomats were discussing the 215-page report in two-day private talks ending Tuesday.

Canada's principal trade policy objectives have been met with the completion of

NAFTA and the global liberalisation pact, according to the report written by GATT economists.

"However, developments in the context of the NAFTA may raise further concerns about the balance between regional and global liberalisation and the risks of trade diversion," it added.

NAFTA, a regional accord setting up a free trade zone among Canada, Mexico and the United States, came into force last January and will phase out tariffs over a 15-year period.

GATT, referring to NAFTA, said: "The long-term gains to Canada are expected to be in industries producing goods intensive in the use of skilled labour and capital."

Last March, GATT set up a working party, open to the 124 member states, to examine NAFTA's consistency with GATT rules. However, diplomats consider it unlikely to condemn the pact.

In the last two years, Cana-

da has reduced or eliminated tariffs on certain textiles, motor vehicle components and chemical products, according to the GATT report.

The country's long-distance telecommunications market has been liberalised and its patent protection law has been revised.

Under the Uruguay Round accord, Canada has agreed to eliminate tariffs in a number of key sectors and to reduce remaining tariffs by an average of 40 per cent over the next five to 10 years, according to the report.

As a result, the government estimates that import duties in 1995-96 will be about 200 million Canadian dollars lower (\$145 million).

In the agricultural sector, more than 100 import quotas are due to be replaced by tariff rate quotas with above quota duties averaging 205 per cent in 1995, falling to 174 per cent in the year 2000.

Saudi wheat exports to stop, minister says

RIYADH (R) — Saudi Arabia is cutting its subsidised wheat production to save water and cash and there will be no surplus to export from 1996, the agriculture minister said.

Saudi Arabia surprised the agricultural world two decades ago by launching an ambitious strategy of turning the desert green to settle nomads to a rural life and to establish strategic self-sufficiency in wheat.

The plan was so generous to farmers it backfired as they took advantage of subsidies. Wheat output rocketed from 3,000 tonnes to a peak of more than four million tonnes in 1992, over double domestic consumption.

A resulting flood of exports raised cries of foul play by competing wheat exporters.

"It is important to emphasise that our wheat strategy was always aimed at self-sufficiency and we did not want to compete on the world markets," Abdullah Abdul Aziz Bin Moammar, the minister told Reuters in an interview Tuesday.

Flying in to Riyadh Airport green circles of wheat in the searing desert are plainly visible watered by modern pivot-centred irrigation and a symbol of how Saudi Arabia's fabulous wealth can change the barren landscape.

But now with cash shortages due to Gulf war expenditure lower oil revenues and growing concern about the kingdom's water reserves, the Saudi government has reined in wheat production and expects to trim it to self-sufficiency by 1996.

Wheat production is being lowered by a strict regime of subsidies cuts and tight control of wheat farming permits.

Diplomats said government wheat subsidies this year were slashed to \$850 million from \$1.87 billion in 1993 and further cuts were expected next year.

"There will be no exports," the minister said. "It was not our aim to export and we were worried once we met that level of self-sufficiency. Nobody expected the target to be reached so quickly, we thought maybe after 20 years or so."

Diplomats said some Saudi farmers have protested about the change in policy but Sheikh Moammar said the government had been careful to implement the measures slowly.

Using the crop year which runs from October to around June, Sheikh Moammar put the amount of wheat bought by the government at subsidised prices at 3.3 million tonnes for 1991/92, three for 42/93, 2.8 for 93/94, 2.5 for 94/95, 2.3 for 95/96.

GATT failure would destroy trade system — Sutherland

NEW YORK (R) — Failure by the United States to pass the GATT world trade agreement would destroy the credibility of the multinational trading system, GATT Director Peter Sutherland said Monday.

"If the Uruguay Round were to fail — and fail it will if the ratification is not completed by Dec. 2 — we will lose not merely the benefits of the pact, but will destroy the multi-lateral trade system," Mr. Sutherland said.

Mr. Sutherland, at a press conference sponsored by the Council of Foreign Relations, a civic group, reiterated that it is crucial that the United States ratify the agreement before the December deadline.

The GATT agreement has come under fire from Republican lawmakers who claim the treaty would compromise U.S. sovereignty — a claim the administration denies. Congress will take up the issue on Nov. 29.

The Clinton administration had expressed confidence it will be able to put together the bipartisan voting bloc needed to pass the GATT trade legislation this year.

The vote, if he is the last major effect of the current Democrat-led Congress before the new Republican-controlled Congress takes over next year.

While it is generally believed passage of the legislation by the House of Representatives will not be difficult, the administration needs the support of 60 out of 100 senators.

The administration had

said it needs about five votes to secure Senate approval for the legislation for the World Trade Organisation, which succeeds the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Mr. Sutherland said failure to implement the Uruguay Round and establish the World Trade Organisation (WTO) as stipulated in the treaty would undermine the credibility of the entire trading system, he said.

"We have a fragile system in a rapidly-changing world. (The trading system) has only the development of contracts between behind it and the institutional framework depends on credibility," said Mr. Sutherland.

That loss of credibility would create a new "extremely-dangerous" era without assurances on tariffs and trade barriers.

Without such assurances international businesses might avoid international ventures. That would hurt the United States, he said. Moreover, a failure to maintain an international trade regime could produce political problems.

"Where is political tension most likely to be felt? It is within trade," and Mr. Sutherland.

The GATT chief reiterated his view the WTO does not impinge on any country's sovereignty.

"Sovereignty is not an issue anywhere," he said.

Mr. Sutherland said it would be "inappropriate to comment" on Republican Senator Robert Dole's attempt to tie his support for

the GATT pact to a concession from the Clinton administration on a capital gains tax cut.

Mr. Sutherland said the trade pact had been a bipartisan effort from the start "and I cannot believe that it will be damaged by internal politics."

He stressed that while he is eager to trumpet GATT's benefits for world trade in general and the United States in particular, he would not seek to influence directly the vote in congress. "I have no intention of going to Washington."

Clinton gets GATT support from opponent

President Clinton received support for the world trade treaty Monday from an unexpected source — one of its staunchest Republican foes.

Congressman Newt Gingrich, who is expected to be named speaker of the House of Representatives in the new Republican-dominated Congress, said Monday that failure to pass GATT "would have catastrophic consequences for the American economy and the world economy."

Appearing at a news conference just before returning to Washington, Mr. Gingrich pledged to work with Mr. Clinton in a bipartisan effort get the trade pact passed.

"I'm going to work actively with the president in a bipartisan manner to try to get this very, very important trade agreement passed. My hope is that next week we will pass it," he said.

Egypt exploits only 10% of its oil resources

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt is exploiting only 10 per cent of its oil resources, a senior oil industry official was quoted as saying.

"We have a lot of oil to be found here. We have found just 10 per cent or less. 'We still have a lot of reserves,' said Shawki Abdine, president of the 12th International Conference on Oil Prospecting and Production, quoted by Egyptian newspapers.

Mr. Abdine, who was speaking at the conference, said Egypt's Western Desert might yield the equivalent of 42 billion barrels of oil, the Red Sea 35 billion barrels, the Nile Delta region 33 billion, and the Sinai peninsula 20 million, according to a study by the Gulf of Suez Petroleum Company (GUPCO).

Mr. Abdine is also president of GUPCO, a joint venture between the U.S. Oil company AMOCO and the Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation (EGPC).

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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 23, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The moon is void of course most of the day so avoid making any important decisions or starting down new paths as they are likely to be plagued with false starts, errors and unexpected hassles.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) The daytime finds you with some new and conservative ideas for getting more revenue with the aid of friends while later you can add some modern methods.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is a day for you to consider various means for gaining your personal aims for you can progress through these and a fellow associate will aid.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can closet yourself with an influential person and get the backing you need for a private project after which add your own up to date ideas.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Take some time out to arrange a jaunt with a friend of good judgment for whatever your joint purpose then include some unique goal to trip.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Whatever you have in mind in a worldly matter is best done with the additional opinion or assistance of an expert in the field of endeavor.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A new project of importance to you requires the support of an outside partner if you are to

get the greatest amount of benefit from this venture.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Seek out business partners with whom you would like to be associated and let them know how well you can work at your chosen vocation, then they will back your goals.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You can best get an associate who needs much permission to do what you wish by meeting at a place of mutually enjoyable recreation.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) The type of activities in which you now are, or wish to engage are best made with the help of a family member.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A day for you to enhance your interest in the entertainments and amusements from which you get the greatest pleasure even though it is a distance to go to them.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) It is necessary to first approach matters at home from a routine and accepted proven stance after which you can add some special ideas of your own.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Your own judgment is very good now about how best to exercise your judgment where abundance to your present abundance is concerned so don't waste time.

Birthstone of November: Topaz-Tiger's Eye

Peanuts

Andy Capp

Mutt'n'Jeff

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

FORLO

TOOBA

CUSSEN

BHLEED

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: SHE WAS - (Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: TEASE FLANK FLIMSY GOSPEL
Answer: How the shoemakers described themselves — "SOLE" MATES

THE Daily Crossword by Eugene Puffenberger

ACROSS

- Innocent one
- Nat or Natalie
- Food dish
- Verve
- Lolapalooza
- 16 in. pants
- Author Ayn
- Certain group
- Chair voice
- Produce vendor
- Failure
- Bert's river
- Muscle
- 27 Dates
- Middy
- Mauna
34. Ru
- 36 Have a by the tail
- 39 Peel
- 41 Vaccine
- 43 Volcanic discharge
- 44 Switzies
- 45 Robert and Elizabeth
- 48 Burnhouse
- 49 Lucio
- 51 Addition
- 53 Mamma over
- 54 The "weir" in China
- 57 Gift sack
- 58 Elvie
- 59 Indesecence
- 64 Small bottle
- 65 Venorise
- 67 Sandwich type
- 68 Fission of
- 69 Appellations
- 70 Mineral vein
- 71 Biblical mountain
- 72 States
- 73 Biblical name

DOWN

- Flailing lot
- Like a who
- Source of harm
- 4 Make beloved
- Capital group
- 5 about (area)
- 7 Canon's
- 8 Set up
- 9 Pie mode
- 10 West Coast bridge
- 11 Mediterranean
- 12 Crucifixion
- 15 Rear of a boat
- 21 Sports gear
- 22 Unruly outbreak
- 26 Twins
- 27 Jungles' ale
- 28 Lacher
- 29 Loud threads
- 30 Contended
- 31 Have the (theated by)
- 35 Invail
- 37 At any time
- 38 Rascals
- 40 Border lake
- 42 Like an
- 43 Neighbor's diet
- 45 Hart
- 47 Hold back
- 50 An Allen
- 52 subducer
- 53 Poi's bird
- 54 Type size
- 56 Fountain confections
- 59 Body of an organ
- 60 Low card
- 61 French city
- 62 Church
- 63 Trouble
- 65 Durecher or Gern

1st Division Basketball Championship

Ahli clash with Orthodoxi today in 1st round final

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — It's time again for the most awaited basketball match of the Kingdom, when all-time rivals Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxi clash Wednesday in the first-round final of the First Division Basketball Championship.

Both teams enter the match with an unbeaten record after winning their five matches. However Al Ahli lead the standings on score difference.

This year's match is reminiscent of the top two teams' matches throughout the eighties, when Al Orthodoxi would play the match almost certain of winning the title. However, it is now Al Ahli who are confident of retaining their third consecutive crown.

Al Orthodoxi are now in a transitional phase where many experienced older players have quit the team while their younger lineup was not prepared to take charge.

The former champions, who had an undisputed reign on the country's basketball scene from 1976-1989, mainly depended on the individual efforts of top players especially Murad Barakat. Therefore the team lost ground to their all time rivals as Barakat lost form during the past three years and quit the team last year.

Barakat is now coaching the team, hoping that his players will at least firmly hold on to runner up position until they are ready to reclaim their crown. They last won the title in 1991.

On the other hand, the Ahli camp have had the most consistent and serious training season with over 18 top players taking part. These include all time stars



Al Ahli's Naser Bushnaq goes for a layup while teammate Walid Badran (right) and Orthodoxi's Jihad Saliba (left) look on during the 1993 championship final (File photo)

Marwan Ma'touq, Samir Murqus, Yousef Zaghloul, Naser Bushnaq an abundant lineup of younger, energetic players like Marwan Al Sa'edi, Walid Badran, Mohammad and Taimour Shamali, Zeid Alkhas, and many others who are determined to hold on to the championship for years to come.

The team had impressive results against most opponents and were held under the 100-point mark only against Al Jazireh and Al Ahli. They are led by their Russian coach Alexander Sasha who was instrumental in altering their style that

enabled them to clinch the title away from Al Orthodoxi in 1990 and win it again in 1992 and 1993. Last year Al Ahli beat Al Orthodoxi 75-69 and 70-60 to clinch the title.

Despite being undermanned for the first time in a decade, Al Orthodoxi demonstrated that they are still a formidable force backed by the presence of Hilal Barakat, the team's undisputed star who is carrying the whole burden of scoring for his team in the absence of his elder brother. Hilal scored 59 points in Al Orthodoxi's 92-75 over Al Jazireh.

Al Jazireh's plans for second place this season were upset by their 17-point loss to Al Orthodoxi. They will thus have to be content with third place for the third consecutive year, unless they defeat Al Orthodoxi by over 17 points in the second round.

Al Jazireh have one match left against Homentmen Wednesday. Al Ahli, a fourth place finisher for the past two years, seem set to stay in their same position for another year after losing 73-69 to Al Jazireh. They might however take third place if they beat Al Jazireh

with over 4 points in the second round.

Despite their defeats, Al Ahli have appeared to be a highly competitive team denying the titleholders their first win under the 100-point mark when Al Ahli won 96-69, the first half ending 43-33.

As the top four teams are almost certain to retain their standings, the same cannot be said of the other three teams, whose ambition seems to be limited to keeping their place among the prestigious group.

In an effort to upgrade the standard of competi-

tion, the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) last year promoted only one team from the second division instead of the usual two, making the number of competing teams seven for the first time. However, this year two teams will be relegated, and only one will be promoted, reducing the number to six as of next season.

This year, Homentmen became the first of the two teams to be relegated after failing to score the necessary number of at least three wins.

Homentmen will have to defeat Al Hussein with a score difference of over 14 points and Al Watani with 26 in order to avoid relegation, a difficult feat to achieve.

Meanwhile Al Hussein pushed Al Watani to the brink of relegation after scoring vital 79-76 win in Irbid Sunday.

Al Watani, a fifth place finisher after defeating Al Hussein in double overtime last year, had hoped to advance their standing after a good training programme with their new Iraqi coach Mohammad Al Najjar, who was previously at Al Orthodoxi.

The fact that the team now finds itself fighting for their place in the division rather than achieve an advanced standing has undoubtedly upset the players and fans especially after their loss to Al Hussein.

Al Watani's only win was over Homentmen. They will have to repeat that result and overcome Al Hussein with over 4 points in the second round to avoid relegation.

The second round of the competition begins Nov. 26 and ends with the second Ahli-Orthodoxi final Dec. 15.

U.S. Major League Soccer to begin in '96

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A Japanese model for success plus financial support from European and Asian investors has helped sustain United States dreams for an elite football league.

Organisers of Major League Soccer (MLS), FIFA's planned follow-up to this year's World Cup, have studied the Japanese League and found British and Japanese funding when support from U.S. firms was lacking.

MLS is now scheduled to begin in 1996 with 10 teams — one year later and two clubs fewer than originally planned.

"From the beginning we have said it's more important to do it right than on a pre-arranged timetable," MLS president and World Cup chairman Alan Rothenberg said.

"It would be wonderful to do it the way they did in Japan. They had a league and teams before they even had a World Cup. But, realistically,

ly, it could never have happened that way in this country."

What could happen is a marketing blitz similar to the one which preceded the Japanese league. Souvenirs with the logos of such clubs as Hiroshima Sanfrece, A-S Flugels and Nagoya Grampus Eight were widely available before teams ever played.

"One of the things we did was look at the success of the J-League in Japan," Rothenberg said.

"Long before there was a game played, there was product on the shelves. With the time for development, we can get things into people's hands."

MLS hopes to own every franchise and have financial backers on a league level. But low support forced Rothenberg into a more common team-owner format for at least half of the league.

"It's nice to say what you could have done and should have done," Rothenberg said.

"We had a lot of Doubting Thomases. They were going to wait and see if the World Cup was successful or not."

"If you think in that environment we could have raised enough money to put out a pro league, you're crazy. We had to silence the critics first."

As a result, teams for the most likely successful U.S. cities — New Jersey, Los Angeles and Washington — have been sold to owner-investors.

The team in the U.S. capital will be managed by a division of the Sponsorship Group, a British-based sports marketing and television production business.

"Our company put a great deal of money at risk believing in the U.S. market was ready to embrace soccer," said Kevin Payne, general manager for the API-owned club. "That turned out to be a very prudent investment. We're convinced the U.S. is

ready."

Japanese investors have also bought into MLS, although Rothenberg would give no details about them.

"We have a group of companies from Japan, which (at their request) I can't give you the identity of until after the first of the year," Rothenberg said.

The Japanese group does not intend to operate a team, Rothenberg said, but he had no objections to such a plan. Japanese investors already own portions of baseball's Seattle Mariners and ice hockey's Tampa Bay Lightning.

"We've been more reactive than pro-active," Rothenberg said. "When investors overseas have indicated an interest, we've been happy to work with them."

MLS plans teams in Los Angeles, Washington, Chicago, New Jersey, Boston, San Jose, Tampa and Columbus, Ohio and two other undetermined U.S. cities.

Milan, Manchester United face moment of truth

PARIS (R) — Yesterday, all of AC Milan's troubles seemed so far away.

Now it looks as though they're here to stay — especially if they lose to Ajax Amsterdam in the Champions' League Wednesday.

Manchester United could well be singing the same refrain if they fail to beat IFK Gothenburg in Sweden on a night of soccer action which may leave the European Cup bereft of its two pre-competition favourites.

Six months ago, such a scenario would have defied belief.

Milan had won the European title with pride and panache in an inspirational 4-0 annihilation of mighty Barcelona, a club performance which soared to heights not seen since Real Madrid's glory days more than 30 years ago.

Manchester United had majestically completed a rare English League and Cup double with a 4-0 thrashing of Chelsea in the final and their tomorrow's seem set for the conquest of Europe.

Suddenly, neither is half the team it used to be.

Milan have spluttered in the Italian League and are already way out of touch with the leaders. Their Champions' League form has

scarcely been better and defeat to Ajax would probably put paid to their chances of a place in the quarter-finals.

Manchester United have returned to the top of the English Premier League but still lack the style and conviction they showed last season and their 4-0 reverse against Barcelona three weeks ago indicated they may be short of top European class.

Neither is helped by a run of bad luck with injuries, a sign of the mounting pressure produced on top clubs by an ever-mushrooming soccer calendar.

Milan, who have to play in Trieste because they are banned from using the San Siro Stadium since Salzburg keeper Otto Konrad was struck by a bottle thrown from the crowd in October, face Ajax without Montenegrin forward Dejan Savicevic, hero of the Barcelona massacre in May.

Midfield motor Demetrio Albertini is also doubtful with a muscle injury sustained when playing for Italy last week.

But Milan are still confident they can keep their heads above water and join Ajax, who lead Group D, in the last eight.

Right back Christian Panucci, who scored twice against AEK Athens earlier

their month, said: "When I and Paolo Maldini attack down the flanks, we always cause problems for opponents. Ajax are a side that play an open game and it ought to be even easier for us against them."

Manchester United travel to Sweden without Danish goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel, Welsh winger Ryan Giggs and Irish midfielder Roy Keane, all injured. Their absence leaves manager Alex Ferguson without the usual problem of deciding which foreign players to leave out and injuries to England's Lee Sharpe and Paul Parker have reduced his choice even further.

Fortunately, his French forward Eric Cantona is back after a four-match ban and he and on-form winger Andrei Anelk could yet prove to be match-winners.

"We're all aware that this

is our most important game of the season, manager Alex Ferguson said. "On the back of what was a disappointing performance in Barcelona we've got something to prove to ourselves."

But the English club's difficulties are compounded by the thought that a draw is unlikely to be enough as it would leave the Swedes and Barcelona needing only to tie their final head-to-head to guarantee the two qualifying places in Group A.

Barcelona travel to Turkey to play Galatasaray and may leave out Bulgarian striker Hristo Stoichkov and bring in Romanian midfielder Gheorghe Hagi instead.

Two leading French strikers are back from injury on opposing sides in the main match of Group B with Jean-Pierre Papin, who broke his hand in training last week, appearing for Bayern Munich against Paris St. Germain.

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Sabatini moves up in rankings

MIAMI (AFP) — Argentina's Gabriela Sabatini, coming off her first tournament crown since May of 1992, moved up two places to seventh in the final 1994 WTA world singles rankings released Monday.

Sabatini defeated Lindsay Davenport 6-3, 6-2, 6-4, in New York Sunday at the \$3.5 million WTA Championships. Sabatini, a U.S. 18-year-old, moved up one position to sixth to remain ahead of Sabatini in the season points race.

Sabatini said after the triumph that reaching the world number one ranking remains her goal, and one she considers well within reach.

"I do believe that, especially if I play the way I did this week, I believe that very much," Sabatini said. "I'm in the right age to be there, where I have reached my peak. I think I have very good chances."

The top five ranked players remained unchanged, with world number one Steffi Graf of Germany followed by Spain's Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario and Conchita Martinez, Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic and France's Mary Pierce.

Martina Navratilova, who retired after the New York event, fell two positions to eighth, followed by Japan's Kimiko Date and Natalia Zvereva of Belarus, who also fell two places from the previous week.

1. Steffi Graf (Germany) 354.45 points
2. Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario (Spain) 311.70
3. Conchita Martinez (Spain) 180.21
4. Jana Novotna (Czech Republic) 164.09
5. Mary Pierce (France) 155.73
6. Lindsay Davenport (USA) 141.72
7. Gabriela Sabatini (Argentina) 138.15
8. Martina Navratilova (USA) 134.60
9. Kimiko Date (Japan) 124.79
10. Natalia Zvereva (Belarus) 123.98
11. Magdalena Maleeva (Bulgaria) 94.89
12. Anke Huber (Germany) 94.40
13. Iva Majoli (Croatia) 84.52
14. Mary Joe Fernandez (USA) 81.44
15. Brenda Schultz (Netherlands) 76.95

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Indian celebration

The Indian community in Jordan celebrates Guru Nanak Jayanti on Friday, Nov. 25, at the premises of the Embassy of India. All Indian nationals and spouses are welcome to the 12 noon to 2 p.m. event, which will include a "langur."

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SPORTS IN BREIF

Maradona wants to play again

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Diego Maradona Monday changed his mind and now says he wants to play professional soccer again. "I would like to play for Boca (Jrs) in September," when his 15-month suspension for failing a drugs test at the World Cup expires, he told a local radio station. His interviewer then gave the microphone again to station. Having Maradona in the team "is a dream all of us have," a surprised Heller said. "Any time," was Maradona's quick response. "Just give me a ring and we get together."

Wimbledon profits boost

LONDON (AFP) — Wimbledon, the world's most famous tennis tournament, made a record profit of 28 million pounds this year, a staggering 70 per cent increase on the previous record of £16.4 million set in 1993. This is a major boost for British tennis, as all of the surplus is given to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) for reinvestment in the game in Britain. Some of the money is intended to add more international tournaments to the domestic calendar, while some will go towards extending the season beyond the traditional summer months. In addition, more experienced coaches will be employed to improve the standards of junior players, and elite training centres are being created round the country.

Schmeichel left behind

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Peter Schmeichel has lost his fight to play in Manchester United's crucial Champions' League contest with IFK Gothenburg Wednesday. The Danish goalkeeper, desperate to return to the side after being dropped in Barcelona could also miss United's next two domestic games. "We've had to leave him behind, unfortunately," said manager Alex Ferguson. "He hasn't recovered from his back injury and the doctor has now told him to rest for seven to 10 days." "With Roy Keane and Ryan Giggs also out, that's three foreigners or assimilated players that we're missing and it makes the selection simpler," he said.

Italy face Dutch test in volleyball final

TOKYO (AFP) — World champion Italy lived up to its pre-tournament promise by beating the United States in four sets Tuesday to gain a final match against the Netherlands. It will be a rematch of the world championship final, which the Italians took in four sets. Andrea Zorzi fired 26 winners out of 40 attempts to collect two points and 24 for side-out, leading the Italians to a 3-1 (15-11, 11-15, 15-11, 15-7) victory. The Americans, the bronze medalists in the world championship in Athens last month, led 11-7 in the third set after splitting the first two, but the Italians then took eight consecutive points to set up victory. "Our players were very tired and had many problems in service reception," said Italian Coach Julio Velasco. "The Americans attacked very fast and quick, so we needed to improve the timing for blocking. I think that made the difference." In the other semi-finals, the Netherlands used their height advantage and power to beat hosts Japan 3-0 (15-8, 15-12, 15-10).

Sampras, Edberg sign for pre-Open exhibition

MELBOURNE (AP) — Wimbledon champion Pete Sampras, Boris Becker, Stefan Edberg and Michael Stich all will play in an exhibition tennis tournament in Melbourne the week before the Australian Open. Tournament promoter Colin Stubs said Tuesday that he also hopes to sign American Michael Chang and Cedric Pioline of France to complete the field for the eight-man Colonial Mutual Classic, which will be played at Kooyong from Jan. 11-14. The exhibition immediately precedes the Australian Open, which runs from Jan. 16-29 at the nearby National Tennis Centre.

Giants edge Oilers

HOUSTON (R) — David Treadwell kicked a 37-yard field goal with two seconds left to lift the New York Giants to a 13-10 victory over the Houston Oilers Monday. Just before the game-winning kick, Houston's Al Del Greco kicked a 43-yard field goal with four minutes left in the fourth quarter to tie the game at 10-10. Treadwell had kicked a 26-yard field goal to give the Giants a 10-7 lead. The Giants (4-7) broke a seven-game losing streak in spoiling the NFL coaching debut of Jeff Fisher. Houston (1-10), which has the worst record in the league, lost for the seventh straight time.

Ex-champ threatens to kill manager

DETROIT (AFP) — Police heave plan no charges against former world super-middleweight boxing champion James Toney, who stormed out of his mother's home with a gun Sunday vowing to kill his former manager. Toney was interviewed by police Monday after officers spent the night watching the homes of manager Jackie Kallen. "He said he had said some things, he was distraught and would just rather let it go," West Bloomfield Township police chief Ron Cronin said. "At this point the case is closed." Toney who lost a unanimous decision to Roy Jones in an International Boxing Federation (IBF) title fight Friday, told an area radio station Monday that he had been ill and overweight but had been pressured into fighting by Kallen.

India choose grass for Davis Cup clash

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India have chosen grass for their Davis Cup playoff match against Hong Kong in February. The Asia-Oceania Zone Group I playoff tie will take place February 3-5 on the grass courts of Calcutta's South Club, the All-India Tennis Association said Tuesday. Indian number one Leander Paes is expected to head the Indian squad. India tumbled out of the elite 16-team Davis Cup World Group in September when they were defeated 3-2 by South Africa in Jaipur.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HUSSEIN
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 7 10 9 5 ♠ 10 7 5 2 ♠ A K 7 6 2
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 3 ♣ ?
What action do you take?
- Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A Q 9 2 7 3 ♠ A Q ♠ A K 10 7 4 2
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 3 ♣ ?
What action do you take?
- Q.3—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 7 2 ♠ 10 8 5 2 ♠ 7 3 ♠ 10 9 7
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?
What action do you take?
- Q.4—East-West, vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 7 2 ♠ 10 8 5 2 ♠ 7 3 ♠ 10 9 7
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?
What do you bid now?
- Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 7 2 ♠ 10 8 5 2 ♠ 7 3 ♠ 10 9 7
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?
What do you bid now?
- Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 7 2 ♠ 10 8 5 2 ♠ 7 3 ♠ 10 9 7
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♠ 2 ♠ ?
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UAE urges dialogue among Gulf states to end disputes

ABU DHABI (Agencies) — Abu Dhabi's crown prince, in talks with the Russian prime minister on Tuesday, called for dialogue among Gulf states to guarantee stability in the oil-rich region, the official WAM news agency reported.

Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahayan and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin also discussed the UAE's dispute with Iran over three strategic Gulf islands. The crown prince called for "a new formula of coexistence among regional states and establishment of understanding and a dialogue to boost confidence on the basis of mutual respect, cooperation and respect of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country," WAM said.

He did not refer outright to Iran and Iraq but the UAE has been locked in an island dispute with Tehran for many years. Iraq had also long claimed neighbouring Kuwait until it recognised the emirate two weeks ago.

Russia played a key role in securing that recognition but the United Nations has stressed Iraq's implementation of other Gulf war resolutions as a pre-requisite for lifting its crippling sanctions on Baghdad.

Mr. Chernomyrdin, accompanied by a large delegation, reassured the UAE leaders that Russia's mediation was intended to ensure "Iraq will implement all U.N. resolutions before the U.N. sanctions are removed," according to WAM.

At talks later with UAE Deputy Prime Minister

Sheikh Sultan Ben Zayed Al Nahayan, the Russian premier was briefed on the dispute with Iran over the tiny islands of Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunbs.

WAM said Sheikh Sultan informed the Russians of the UAE's decision to seek international arbitration on the dispute after the collapse of direct negotiations with Iran in Abu Dhabi in 1992.

"The UAE presented its position to go the International Court of Justice to recover its full sovereignty on the islands through peaceful means. The Russian stand was very positive," the agency said.

Mr. Chernomyrdin is the first Russian head of government to visit the Gulf and his trip has already resulted in the signing of economic and investment agreements with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Russia already has an economic pact with the UAE but they are expected to sign an investment accord soon.

The prime minister is also due to visit Oman, another member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), whose trade with Russia stood at around \$350 million in 1993.

During the talks in the UAE, Mr. Chernomyrdin explained economic reforms and new investment opportunities in Russia, officials said.

The Russians have in recent months intensified their efforts to rebuild their influence in the Middle East that had waned with the collapse of communism and Mr. Chernomyrdin's tour was clearly designed to bolster Moscow standing in a region where it

was once shunned by the Gulf monarchies.

Mr. Chernomyrdin flew here from Kuwait, where he signed five agreements in various fields with the emirate which alone among the Gulf monarchies had relations with Moscow during the cold war.

Leading a high-level delegation of economic, energy and military officials, he started his tour in Saudi Arabia, where he also signed cooperation agreements and sought joint investment projects.

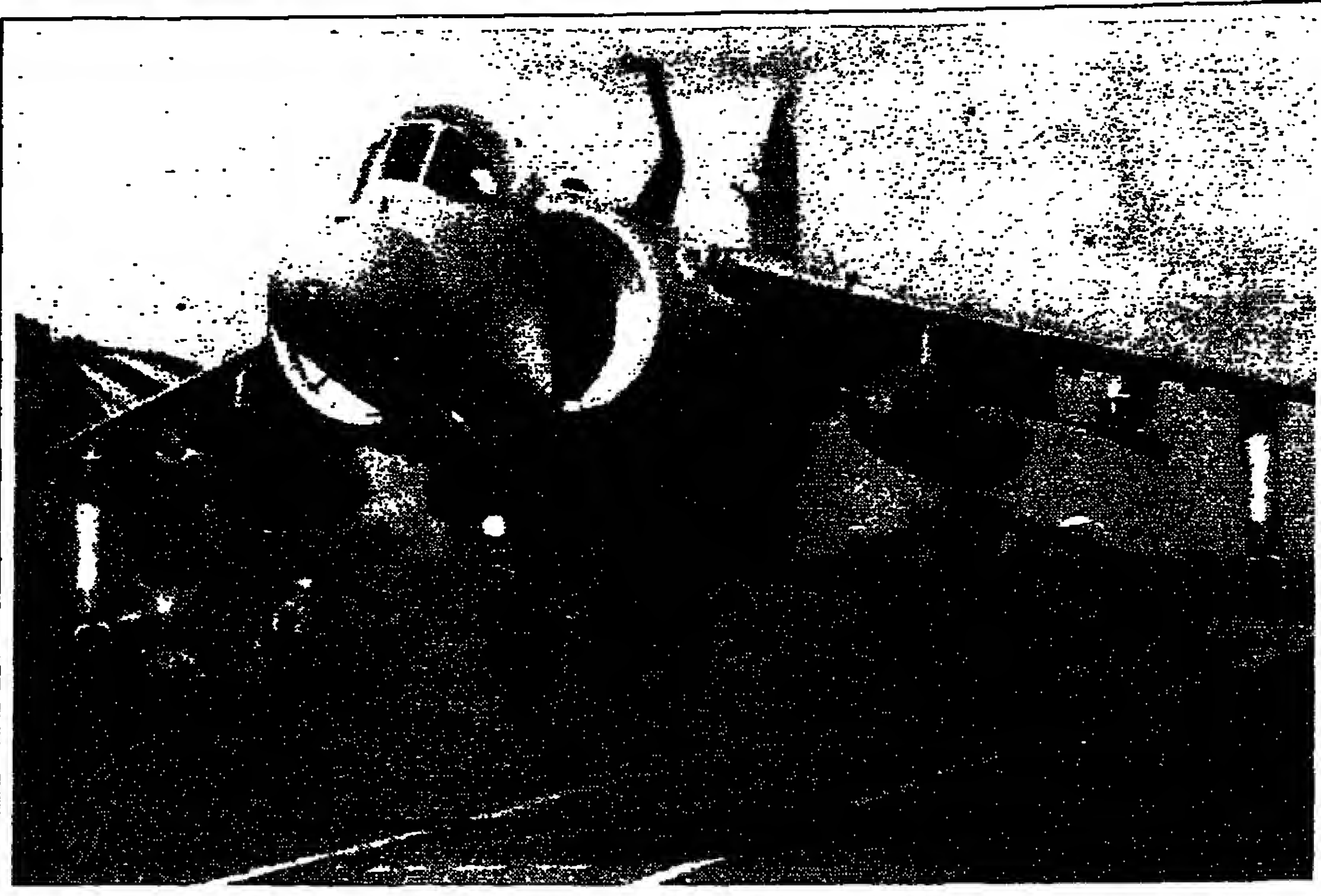
The Gulf market is dominated by Western firms, but Kuwait bought Russian BMP-3 armoured vehicles and multiple rocket launcher systems in August and is considering buying more.

Diplomats listed the Sukhoi-27 and MiG-29 jet warplanes and anti-aircraft missiles as items that Russia might try to sell the UAE and other Gulf states.

The relative cheapness of Russian arms may be an incentive as Gulf states look around for ways to cut government spending.

In Saudi Arabia, Mr. Chernomyrdin discussed investment and Russian debts, although the kingdom's finance minister denied on Monday Russian media reports that Saudi Arabia had agreed to reschedule debts run up by the Soviet Union.

Etisalat, the UAE's telecommunications company, wants to have its own satellite in orbit in the next three to four years, and a feasibility study is due to be finished this year.



SEA HARRIER FA2: A recent file photo showing a British Sea Harrier FA2 fighter plane aboard HMS Invincible, currently operating over Bosnia. The Royal Navy Sea

Harrier jump-jets narrowly escaped unharmed after coming under attack from Serb surface-to-air missiles Tuesday (See story on page 5) (AFP photo)

Menem says Israel must return Golan

DAMASCUS (AP) — President Carlos Menem of Argentina says that Israel must surrender the occupied Golan Heights if there is to be a durable peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Menem, whose parents were Syrian Muslims, arrived in Damascus Monday on a three-day visit during which he will seek to persuade Syria to resume negotiations with Israel that have been stalled since February.

"The restoration of Israeli-occupied Syrian land is a necessary step for the establishment of peace in the region and for the establishment of coexistence so that the countries of the region might live within internationally-recognized borders," Mr. Menem said Monday night.

Speaking at a banquet held in his honour by President Hafez Al Assad, Mr. Menem said: "The implementation of the relevant U.N. resolutions is indispensable for the establishment of just, comprehensive and durable peace in this part of the world."

Syria insists that the peace

talks with Israel cannot progress until the Jewish state makes a commitment for a complete withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Israel was offered a phased and partial withdrawal over several years. The Syrians have rejected that.

Mr. Assad, who held talks with Mr. Menem earlier Monday, reiterated that Syria was keen to achieve a peace settlement in the Middle East and blamed Israel for the lack of progress in the negotiations.

"A just and comprehensive peace is our strategic option and if the peace process has not yet led to the hoped-for results, it's because of the obstacles placed by Israel in the way of this process and its running away from a commitment to the rules upon which the peace process is established," Mr. Assad declared at the banquet.

"Our efforts to achieve the optimum level of economic and social development are combined with our struggle for achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region," Mr. Assad said.

Kuwait Islamists slam peace process with Israel

KUWAIT (AP) — Islamic fundamentalist members of parliament Tuesday denounced the peace process with Israel as well as the Kuwaiti government for supporting it before consulting with the representatives of the people.

"It is a shameful, disgraceful and submissive crime," said Shiite Deputy Adnan Abdul Samad. "How can we forget the rivers of blood of our martyrs?"

He asserted that all agreements Arab countries have signed with Israel were "agreements with ruling regimes... not with the people," most of whom are oppressed and cannot express their real views.

Khaled Al Adwa, an Islamic lawmaker and a mosque preacher, said the time had come for the government to consult with the legislature before announcing its position on such issues.

Islamic fundamentalists and their supporters held 19 of the 50 seats in parliament, which was elected in October 1992.

Mr. Adwa criticised In-

formation Minister Sheikh Saud Al Sabah for saying last week that it was only a matter of time before the Arabs ended their boycott of the Jewish state.

Sheikh Saud had said "the existence of Israel is a fact" and that Arab countries should make a decision about lifting the boycott "before one is imposed on them."

Kuwait and its partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Oman — have dropped the "secondary" boycott, under which countries blacklisted goods sold by non-Israeli companies if those companies had activities in Israel.

But the six have said they will continue to prohibit direct dealings with Israel until it has resolved its disputes with its immediate Arab neighbours.

Mr. Abdul Samad said Israeli goods "have started to invade markets in Kuwait," and Kuwaiti merchants had workers removing "made in Israel" tags from them in special storage areas.

Clinton ready to seek approval for monitors in Golan

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The American role in concluding an Israeli-Syrian peace agreement "is to do all we can to enhance the prospect" for achieving it and to avoid making statements that "raise questions about whether we're prepared to promote and support such an agreement," a senior Clinton administration official said Monday.

The official confirmed that President Clinton, publicly and privately, assured Israeli Prime Minister Rabin that he is prepared to seek congressional approval to send American troops to the Golan Heights should such a move be necessary to facilitate a peace treaty between Damascus and Tel Aviv.

U.S. military and civilian personnel have been playing a similar monitoring role in the Sinai Desert as part of the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty.

Mr. Rabin and Mr. Clinton covered a range of bilateral and Middle East peace issues in a Nov. 21 meeting that included 30 minutes of private talk. Among other things, they discussed expediting help to the embattled Palestine Liberation Organisation as it attempts to make a success of its limited self-rule mandate in Jericho and the Gaza Strip, and U.S. efforts to enhance Israeli security, including a continued go-ahead for development of the Arrow anti-ballistic missile and export licenses for two super computers.

Mr. Clinton told questioners on the comments of Sena-

tor Jesse Helms opposing a U.S. presence in the Golan that it is premature to discuss the matter because neither side has made such a formal proposal. But in what many reporters took to be his firmest statement of support for the concept to date, the president said he would be prepared to make the case for a U.S. presence should that be a condition for peace.

He cited approvingly the Sinai commitment, saying no American "begs" the Egyptian-Israeli peace accord flowing from the Camp David accords. When the new Republican majority organizes the Senate in January, Helms is slated to become chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

The official and Mr. Clinton's remarks in a photo opportunity were not directly addressed to Mr. Helms. "I think what he was getting at," the official said, "is that if there's a chance to go ahead and conclude an agreement" between Damascus and Tel Aviv, "the American role is to do all we can to enhance the prospect and the possibility of achieving such an agreement. Those in this country who are interested in seeing peace should be careful not to be making the kinds of statements that might raise questions about whether or not we're prepared to promote and support such an agreement."

The official said the issue of possible use of U.S. troops in the Gaza "was not much of a topic" in the Clinton-Rabin

discussion "because this is an issue that depends on a much broader agreement being reached" between Israel and Syria. But Mr. Rabin told Mr. Clinton he has discussed the possibility, in the context of the Sinai precedent, when addressing U.S. audiences.

Pressed to say if Mr. Clinton assured Mr. Rabin "he would be prepared to make the case" for U.S. troops to Congress "if a peace treaty were to depend on disengagement on the Golan monitored by a force that would include U.S. troops," the official replied, "yes."

The official said there had not been time to gauge the foreign reaction to another Helms statement — that the Middle East peace process is a fraud. He said, as Mr. Clinton had suggested earlier, that the current process which has resulted in agreements with the PLO and with Jordan had begun under a Republican president as part of the Madrid Conference co-chaired by the United States and the then-Soviet Union. He said the response to statements such as Helms' is to stress Mr. Clinton's commitment to the peace process.

"The peace process has always enjoyed strong bipartisan support," the official pointed out, "and we will re-emphasize that and the president's commitment to pursue it to the point that it finishes the job. There will be no relaxation in terms of his own commitment and, there-

(Continued on page 3)

Lebanon parade marks independence

BEIRUT (AP) — Dozens of tanks and armoured personnel carriers paraded through central Beirut Tuesday in the shadow of civil war devastation to mark Lebanon's 51st anniversary of independence from France.

President Elias Hrawi took the salute from a red-carpeted review stand below shell-pocked high-rise buildings that once served as sniper nests for warring Muslims and Christians during the 1975-90 civil war.

He was flanked by Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri. Army Commander General Emile Lahoud, wearing a blue naval admiral's uniform, saluted from a podium at the opposite side of the boulevard.

The columns of U.S.-made M-48 tanks and M-113 armoured personnel carriers rumbled across the mid-city museum boulevard, scene of some of the fiercest fighting of the war.

The ceremonies began with the release of scores of white

doves to symbolise the peace that has held since October 1990, despite periodic bombings and assassinations.

Most of the doves fluttered over the parade, but six sat in the middle of the parade route throughout the 75-minute event untroubled by the roar of armour.

Tokens units of the army's 12 brigades and six newly formed rapid intervention battalions marched past the review stands behind truck-mounted 40-barrelled rocket launchers and howitzers.

Unlike other independence day parades since the end of the war, the four aging Hawker Hunter jet fighters that make up Lebanon's air force did not stage a flypast Tuesday. There was no explanation for their absence.

On Monday, Mr. Hrawi said Lebanon was committed to peace talks with Israel, but reiterated that he would not sign a separate treaty before Syria does.

"We shall strive shoulder to shoulder with Syria to

reach a just and comprehensive peace based on land for peace," Mr. Hrawi said in a nationally televised speech.

He stressed that the Beirut government will accept nothing short of a complete Israeli withdrawal from a border enclave it occupies in South Lebanon.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has been excluding Lebanon from his numerous Middle East shuttles to push forward the peace negotiations, since a breakthrough in the Syrian-Israeli talks would automatically lead to Lebanon's acquiescence.

Syria has 40,000 troops stationed in Lebanon as peacekeepers to prevent the civil war reigniting.

Israel occupies 1,100 square kilometres of South Lebanon as a "security zone."

Mr. Hrawi said he was ready to send 30,000 of the army's 50,000 troops to the south to prevent any raids on northern Israel if Israel withdrew.

NEWS IN BRIEF

French TV film sparks protests

PARIS (AFP) — A row erupted Tuesday over a French television programme which retouched pictures of three Muslim youths, adding beards and moustaches in an apparent attempt to make them look like Muslim extremists. The programme's producer admitted the pictures were clearly manipulated and apologised, but the three men involved have made a formal protest and are demanding compensation, saying they do not even practise Islam.

The weekly programme "Marche du Siecle" shows on the state-run France-3 TV channel, originally used pictures of the three men last year in a report on inner-city problems. Then last month the programme ran a report on French Muslims — and used the same pictures to illustrate a section on their attitudes to Algeria's banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). The new picture, published by the daily Le Parisien alongside the original Tuesday, was, however, retouched with beards and moustaches added, to make them look like extremists. "We looked just like Islamic militants. I was disgusted," Hamid, one of the three men from the northern city of Lille, told the newspaper. "I have family in Algeria... people there have satellite dishes and a lot of them watched this programme — I don't know what could happen... we don't have any link whatever with the FIS," said another, Rahlem.

Floods leave 30 dead in Djibouti

DJIBOUTI (AFP) — Floods have claimed at least 30 lives over the past 24 hours in floods in Djibouti where a big rescue operation spearheaded by French forces is underway, local officials and French military sources said Tuesday. The toll could go higher as several people are still unaccounted for and more rain was forecast for Tuesday. Twenty people drowned in the worse-affected areas of Ali-Sabieh and Dikhil in the south of the small Horn of Africa country and another 10 people were swept away in the capital by the swollen Ambouli River, the Interior Ministry said. A large number of Somali refugees are housed in camps in southern Djibouti. French military sources said French troops, who are based in this former French colony, had rescued nearly 600 people stranded by the rising waters. About 100 were winched to safety by helicopter while 470 others were picked up either by helicopters which found a dry place to land or by dinghy.

Police guard killed in southern Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — The body of a police guard who had been shot dead was found Tuesday floating in a canal near the southern Egyptian town of Mallawi, the Interior Ministry said. It was not immediately clear if the guard, Mikhail Farag, was killed by Islamic extremists. Farag, a Coptic Christian, was the security man found dead in the area this week. On Sunday, the body of a policeman was found with a fatal gunshot wound. The area is a stronghold for Muslim fundamentalist groups that have been blamed for a 2½ year campaign of violence aimed at overthrowing Egypt's secular government and replacing it with Islamic rule. Tuesday's death raised to 12 the number of people killed in the Mallawi area since the start of this month. Mallawi is 250 kilometres south of Cairo.

Iran repatriates 2,000 Kurdish refugees

TEHRAN (AFP) — More than 2,000 Iraqi Kurds have left here for home since September, under a voluntary repatriation program arranged by Iran and the United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the agency said here Tuesday. The programme, aimed at returning most of the up to 60,000 Iraqi Kurds currently living in Iran, was due to have been launched last spring, but it was delayed due to the fighting among rival Kurdish factions in northern Iraq. The repatriation process, however, will come to a halt until next spring as the movement of refugees would be difficult during the winter in mountainous regions of Iraqi Kurdistan, according to UNHCR.

Turkey receives \$120m in U.S. grants

ANKARA (R) — Turkey and the United States signed an agreement on Tuesday for the transfer of a \$120 million grant to ease Ankara's losses incurred by four years of U.N. trade sanctions on Baghdad. "The economic support fund grant is a part of the almost \$3 billion in assistance which the U.S. has provided to Turkey since 1990 when U.N. sanctions on Iraq were put in place," U.S. Ambassador Richard Barkley told the signing ceremony. Mr. Barkley said the grant would help Turkey offset its losses from the sanctions on Iraq. Turkey's second biggest trading partner and top oil supplier before the Gulf crisis broke out in August 1990, Turkey backed the U.S.-led coalition forces against Iraq, shutting a major Iraqi export oil pipeline and allowing Western military forces to use bases on its territory to hit Iraq. Turkey, which supports the easing of sanctions on Iraq, claims its losses through the bans have exceeded \$20 billion.

UAE court confirms jail term for 6 Indians

DUBAI (R) — Six Indian nationals who staged a play in which they were depicted eating the bodies of the prophet Mohammad and Jesus Christ have lost an appeal of their blasphemy conviction in a United Arab Emirates (UAE) court. The English-language Khaleej Times said on Tuesday the appeals court in the emirate of Sharjah confirmed the sentence of the six defendants to six years in jail each and ordered the destruction of a videotape of the controversial play. The UAE laws forbid anyone taking part in or supporting anything derogatory to religion. The six were among 11 Indian men convicted of blasphemy in 1992 by a court in Sharjah where the play was staged. They were later set free on appeal by the Sharjah appeals court in 1993 but have since been re-arrested. The amateur play, called "Corpses Eating Ants" and performed in the southern Indian Malayalam language, also depicted ants eating the body of Karl Marx, the father of communism. None of the six defendants were present "as they had apparently left the country after their passports were returned to them by court authorities," the newspaper added.

Turks charge German, free another over Kurds

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Turkish authorities have charged a German man with abetting Kurdish separatists but have released a German woman arrested with him, Anatolia news agency reported Tuesday. Andreas Landwehe, 32, was charged Monday night by the Istanbul state security court with "collaborating" with the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK). Karen Braun, 28, was released on bail. The two Germans were detained on Nov. 12 at Kapikule on the Bulgarian border. A PKK activist to whom the two Germans allegedly gave a satellite telephone was also under arrest, officials said. Police said PKK propaganda in the form of video and audio cassettes destined for PKK members in Germany had been found hidden in the Germans' car.

COLUMN

Fleiss attorneys try to prove entrapment

LOS ANGELES (R) — Lawyers for Heidi Fleiss sought Monday to prove that the so-called "Hollywood Madam" was entrapped by a police "sting" operation into providing four alleged prostitutes for officers posing as Japanese businessmen. Ms. Fleiss, who is alleged to have run a high-priced prostitution ring catering to the rich and famous, had pleaded not guilty to four charges of pandering — recruiting women as prostitutes — and one count of possessing cocaine. She faces up to 11 in prison if convicted. Detective Sammy Lee, questioned by Defence Attorney Anthony Brooklier, said he had asked one of the women sent by Ms. Fleiss to a Beverly Hills hotel to provide cocaine and sex. As he started his defence of Ms. Fleiss, 28, the daughter of a wealthy Beverly Hills doctor, Mr. Brooklier played a lengthy videotape showing Mr. Lee with one of the women and then all four women with the undercover officers. Portions had been shown to the jury by the prosecution but Mr. Brooklier said he wanted the panel to watch the whole tape so it could see how his client had been entrapped.

The jury earlier in the case heard from 23-year-old Samantha Burdette, who admitted she was a prostitute and said her prices for a "date" varied from \$1,000 to \$10,000, and Kimberly Burch, who said she had never been paid for sex before. Both women, who were granted immunity from prosecution in return for their testimony, said they had been paid \$1,500 by the undercover officers. Other officers burst into the hotel room and arrested them before any sex took place, they said.

But the six have said they will continue to prohibit direct dealings with Israel until it has resolved its disputes with its immediate Arab neighbours.

Mr. Abdul Samad said Israeli goods "have started to invade markets in Kuwait," and Kuwaiti merchants had workers removing "made in Israel" tags from them in special storage areas.

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formation Minister Sheikh Saud Al Sabah for saying last week that it was only a matter of time before the Arabs ended their boycott of the Jewish state.

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